

The Magic Behind Success:

What Can Business Leaders Learn from Magicians Regarding Creativity and Communication?

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Senior Capstone Project
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ABSTRACT

The following research demonstrates the connection between the art of magic and the world of business. More specifically, it explores the overlap between the innovation and communication techniques magicians use when creating new ideas, developing a routine, performing, and a parallel comparison on what it takes to run a successful business. The capstone will first look at what the "magician" is including the types of tricks they perform. It will then analyze the entrepreneurial magicians and their creative process behind developing new routines. Finally, it will examine the verbal and non-verbal communication techniques magicians use to connect with their audience members when performing. In the end, readers will learn that even though sleight of hand is an important factor in becoming a magician, creative thinking and effective communication strategies are more important in order to have the greatest impact on your audience and have a successful show – or in an entrepreneur's case, a successful business.

INTRODUCTION

“We often forget that all of these performers, no matter what their specialty, must have at least two things in common if they want to be good magicians and sensible artists. First, they must possess the ability to create an atmosphere of the incredible, performing seemingly impossible effects; and second, they must be able to communicate to their audiences.” – Juan Tamariz, The Five Points in Magic

Imagine yourself as an entrepreneur. You want to create the new product or service that will be the “next big thing.” You want to create the new product or service that will help people with their day-to-day lives. You want to create the new product or service that will change the world.

But you don’t know where to begin. You can’t seem to think of something that has already been invented. You can’t seem to think of a problem you want to solve. You can’t seem to wrap your mind around a solid idea. In other words, you’re stuck in the “entrepreneurial block” and don’t know how to get out.

Have you ever thought about talking to a magician?

Think back to a time when you were amazed by a magic trick and try to answer the following three questions:

- (1) Do you remember how the trick made you feel?
- (2) Do you remember what the trick was?
- (3) Do you remember the magician’s name?

Most likely, your memory became more vague from the first question to the third question. Why does this occur?

Even though sleight of hand manipulation and misdirection may be important characteristics to achieve the “trick”, what is more important is how magicians connect with people and bring them together. Creativity and presentation are critical elements for a magician to effectively communicate with audience members, regardless if a performer is an expert in sleight of hand.

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There are two main strategies magicians use that help them create a certain perspective so their audience wants to see more:

- (1) They are constantly thinking of new and innovative ways to show their audience tricks the spectators have never seen before and;
- (2) They use effective verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to make these tricks the best they can be.

The way a magician's mind works is unique and creative. Magicians are constantly looking for different and new ways to solve problems and always want to leave a lasting impression for their audience. Magic is not just a performing art - it's a tool that can bring people together (who probably have never met before) to create a sense of excitement, wonder, and curiosity about what is possible and impossible in this world. And that is exactly what business leaders and successful businesses should do as well.

"Thinking out of the box" is a phrase people hear all the time in order to generate new ideas. But how does a person "think outside the box?" How do you get out of the box? Where do you go? How do you get *back* into the box? What is this "box" to begin with? Giovanni Corazza explains in his TedTalk in 2014 (called *Creative Thinking: How to Get Out of the Box and Generate Ideas*) that this "box" is what you know and what you don't know yet. Human beings know how things *are* because that is how things have always been. However, if someone wants to think "outside" the box, a person must think of something that will cross the borders within the minds of what you learned and what you haven't thought about yet. This box is your "comfort level." Thinking outside the box brings human beings on a path they have never been before, which makes them uncomfortable. As a result, you revert back to the box in order to feel more comfortable. This is why magicians are successful: they bring your mind to a place it has never been before.

There are similarities and techniques that magicians use in the creativity process, developing a routine, and performing a show that can be used for businesses as well.

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Running a successful business is all about creating the right perspective about your product or service for your target market. Magicians are extremely knowledgeable in that field and can provide great insight on how to look at running a business from a different angle with techniques they use. Anyone who wants to run a successful business would benefit greatly from learning how a magician thinks.

The concept of creating a startup company can be perfectly parallel in developing a routine as a professional magician. Whether that be an entertainer who does stage shows or keynote presentations, a communication or marketing manager who would like to enhance brand awareness, or an entrepreneur who would be interested in learning different strategies to create new products or connect with his or her audience members on a more effective level, the following content will benefit all parties.

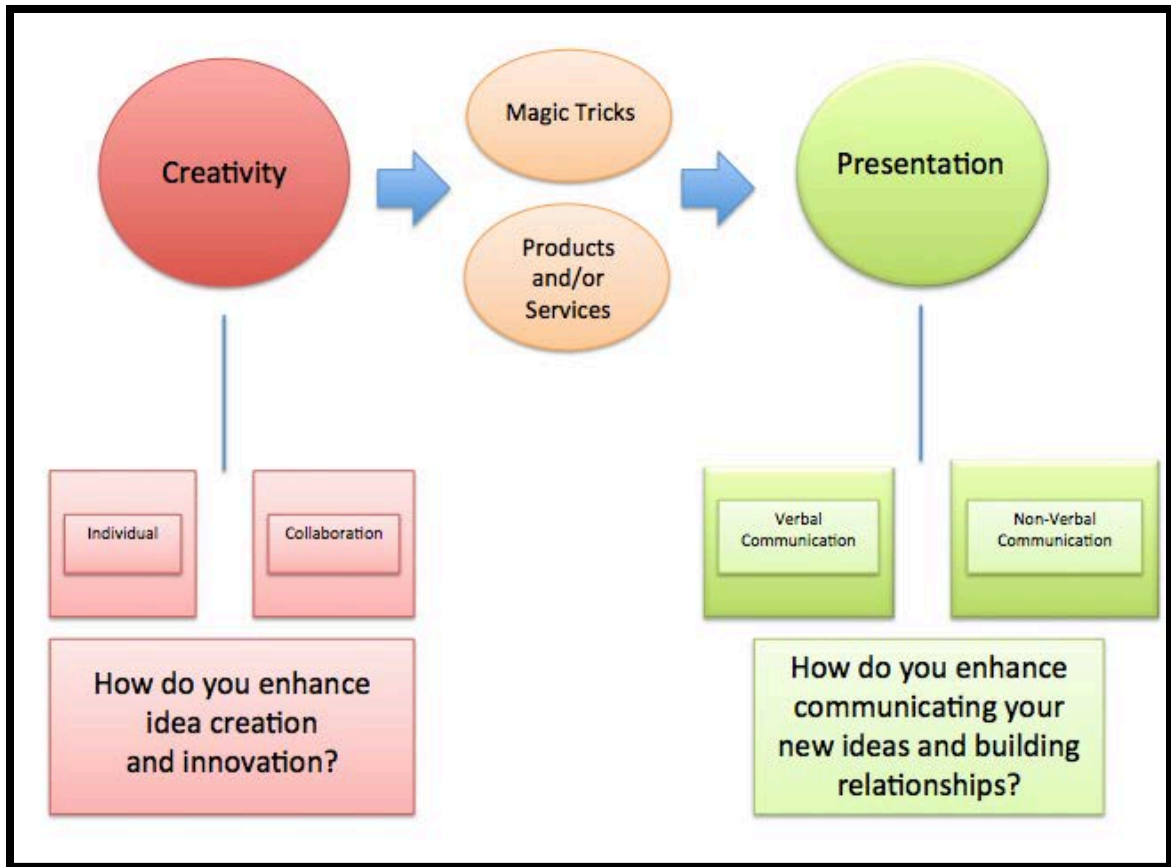
To translate the magician's perspective to a business perspective, I have outlined the potential questions and thought processes that both magicians and business leaders may have below in Table 1 (Questions from Magicians and Business Leaders) and Figure 1 (Creativity and Presentation within the Magic Industry and Business Field).

Table 1: Questions from Magicians and Business Leaders

Magician's Perspective	Obstacle	Business Leader's Perspective
Which trick should I create to entertain my audience?	What needs to be solved?	What problem is my target market looking to solve?
How do I create a method for this perceived effect?	How do we solve it?	What product or service would solve their problem?
What actions do I need to cover the method of the routine?	How do we hide the "secret" or "solution" so competitors cannot duplicate it?	What are our advantages that our competitors don't have and how can we use them to make us stronger?
What can I do differently to make sure my audience members remember me?	How do we sell the experience?	What creativity and communication strategies will enhance our brand awareness?

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Figure 1: Creativity and Presentation within the Magic Industry and Business Field



The Importance of This Research

Magicians are experts in perception and delivering specific messages, and in order to have a successful business, one must create a positive perception of the brand to the customers as well. More specifically, creativity and effective communication is vital in the business world. The successful use of innovation and verbal and nonverbal communication is critical to the success of any type of business, whether that be sales, marketing, advertising, relationships, etc. The research gathered from this capstone not only relates to the magic industry, but to the greater business world, too.

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There are two primary reasons why I am looking at this topic:

(1) Businesses must adapt to any change in the “business world” that may occur in the future and;

(2) Magicians must adapt to any change in the “magic world” that may occur in the future.

To be more specific, according to the Board CEO Survey of 2014, one of the top-rated traits businesses are struggling with right now is customer relationship and innovation (ranked second and third, respectively). In other words, modern businesses must learn to use different and unique communication and marketing tools to create stronger relationships with their employees and customers if they want to succeed, in addition to creating new ways to be innovative in the workplace.

In regard to the magic industry, magic-related shows have been appearing more on television in the last ten years. However, it is now focused on *how* a magician presents his tricks compared to simply focusing on the magician *performing* to random people (Specific business, television, and magic trends can be found in the Innovation Within the Magic Industry Section). What does this mean? Those magicians who are highly specialized in creativity and communication/relationship building skills are becoming more and more successful. This example provides evidence that successful magicians have a certain trait that businesses are currently struggling with.

Credentials

I have had a strong passion for the performing arts, specifically magic, throughout my entire life. I will provide a brief history of myself on how I started to delve into magic and what I have done throughout my life to support my knowledge on this topic. I am not using this section to simply showcase my resume, but rather to demonstrate I have relevant experience on and off stage with magic and consider myself knowledgeable regarding the topic.

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I first became interested in magic when I was attending a family event (with people I didn't know) and I created a magic trick to entertain myself. After experimenting with a few ideas, I started creating my own tricks with everyday objects such as cards and coins. A few days later I filmed myself performing some of my creations and posted videos online. Since I was already in the "magic-mode", I started researching more and stumbled upon a particular website that caught my eye.

I was searching through their products when I realized some products were used by well-known magicians, such as David Copperfield, Criss Angel, and David Blaine. I posted videos of my creations in their Media Section only expecting constructive criticism for what I considered simple tricks.

It was only a few minutes later when a company representative contacted me asking for my phone number. He told me just based off the videos I submitted, he was impressed with my creativity and saw potential in me for the future. Since my face wasn't shown in the videos, he thought I was a bit older than what he expected. After numerous conversations, I signed a contract with the company becoming the youngest "creative consultant" they ever hired. Everyone else working for the company was over 25 years old, while I was only 12 at the time.

From that moment on, I decided to learn more about magic. I learned the basics first and then started creating more and more of my own material. By performing more I became increasingly comfortable with the art and finally understood this philosophy: everything in life is based on perception. For instance, if someone can question the "norm", they have the ability to enhance their creativity and motivation, thus having a more optimistic point of view in any type of situation. As the years went by, the company was intrigued by this concept and asked if I wanted to write a book about it. I finally wrote and published *The Perfect Illusion: Life*, which shows how the art of magic can help people look at life in a more optimistic way. It not only teaches magic tricks, but also a motivational book that provides methods on how a person should pursue their passions.

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After talking to the talent agency, I was fortunate enough to attend brainstorming sessions with consultants who worked with acclaimed magicians such as David Copperfield, Criss Angel, and David Blaine. Over the years, I started to learn more about magic and how to create a strong portfolio. In 2015, I was featured on a world-wide talent television show, *America's Got Talent*, judged by Howie Mandel, Howard Stern, Heidi Klum, and Melanie Brown. Since then, I consulted and was in a magic themed Toyota commercial, performed for clients such as Adam West, William Shatner, the coaches for the Boston Celtics, and I am currently producing a multi-media documentary on the content within this capstone.

In addition to owning three businesses and majoring in Entrepreneurship and Marketing while minoring in Communications at Bryant University (Class of 2016), I believe the merge of my “magic” experiences and passion with entrepreneurship and communications supports my understanding within this capstone.

Disclaimer About the Following Research

I want to emphasize this study was *not* about the *deception* and *manipulation techniques* magicians use when they perform. A common misconception about magicians (and a stereotype that is still alive) is that magicians are “cheaters” and/or “liars.” A magician's job is to entertain and create a sense of self-belief using their creativity and communication skills. Of course magicians are *using tricks* to entertain their audience members, but that is *not* why magicians perform. *Please note I did **not** research or analyze how magicians can help businesses **deceive** their customers in **illegal** ways.* I am strictly focusing on the **positive aspects** that are **ethical and legal**.

Method for Collecting Data

“What the eyes see, the heart must believe.” – Dai Vernon

I was fortunate enough to have Bryant University (located in Smithfield, RI) and the Jackson W. Goss Grant pay for my travels to Los Angeles, California to conduct in-person interviews on people specialized in this subject. I believe this was the most effective way to analyze my research question (“What can business leaders learn from magicians regarding creativity and communication?”) because people with real-life experience can explain their techniques in person and on-camera, since I am also producing a documentary on the following content. The research within this capstone comes from those interviews, in addition to past research on the subject (a list of questions that were asked can be found in the appendix). Some interviews took place in The Magic Castle whereas others took place in coffee shops and their residence. Magicians also demonstrated tricks and examples of how they can potentially present the tricks differently depending on the audience.

The documentary I created is focused on the following research. The process itself took one year to complete. This ranged from creating a story board, contacting magicians I believed would be beneficial for the documentary, traveling to Los Angeles for interviews, and post-production. As a result, after analyzing the footage, the documentary is primarily based on The Magician - Entrepreneurial Journey I developed, which will further be discussed. Since I did not have time to interview business leaders in person, the business application is described with a voice over and animation within the documentary. If you would like to see the documentary in its entirety, please contact me directly.

Below are the places I travelled to and those who I interviewed with their credentials. I appreciate and thank them for their time (Table 2 – Location and Field Research):

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Table 2: Location and Field Research

<i>Location and Field Research</i>	Significance
The Magic Castle Los Angeles, California	A combination of a museum and performance area, this is an invite-only venue. It has a strict dress code and only members are allowed in. Membership requires an extensive audition in front of the committee and other various tasks. Since I am not a member, a member could bring me as a guest with strict requirements. However, I was fortunate to be invited since the capstone is for research purposes.
Kayla Drescher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant for David Copperfield • Featured on the TODAY Show • Society of American Magician's Presidential Citation • Winner of Boston's 2013 "Magician of the Year" Award and David Copperfield's "Search for the Next Great Magician"
Paul Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Awards from the Academy of Magical Arts: Close Up Magician of the Year (2008) and Lecturer of the Year (2002) • Known for his close up, strolling, and tradeshow magic • Podcast talks about how his other jobs has helped him in his magic career
Stathi Zaf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known for his upcoming comedy-magic show, <i>Zaf Out Loud</i>, which demonstrates the importance of comedy and creativity in performance arts • Consultant for James L. Clark, Blacks Magic Group, Cyril Takayama, Paul Harris, John Duke Logan, and Doug McKenzie • Performed on four continents and toured in Europe • Technical Editor for <i>Mentalism for Dummies</i> and Associate Editor for <i>Street Magic Magazine</i> • Creator and product developer of over 200 original magic tricks • Post-Production editor for <i>Authentic Arran</i> TV Series • Executive Producer for <i>Boots on the Ground: Haiti</i> Documentary • Owner of Unique Concepts, S&F Gas Works, and D.I.D. Productions
Michael Trixx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines magic and rock and roll within his shows • Featured on <i>NBC's America's Got Talent</i> • Winner of Florida and South Carolina's State Championship of Stage Magic

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Jonathan Levit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host for shows on The Discovery Channel, The Science Channel, The Biography Channel, and VH1 • Featured on <i>Masters of Illusion</i> National Television Show • Consulted for the movie <i>Now You See Me</i> with actors Jesse Eisenberg and Dave Franco • Consulted for the movie <i>The Incredible Burt Wonderstone</i> with actors Steve Carell, Alan Arkin, Olivia Wilde • Featured in National Commercials: Circuit City, Honda, and Verizon
Joel Ward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed for actors Johnny Depp, Justin Timberlake, Katy Perry, and Emma Stone • Featured on <i>Lance-Burton Young Magicians Showcase</i> television show • Guest on <i>The Bonnie Hunt Show</i>, <i>Tonight Show with Jay Leno</i> and <i>Tosh.0</i> • Teen Magic World Champion for International Brotherhood of Magicians Competition
Justin Willman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featured on <i>The Tonight Show</i>, <i>Ellen</i>, <i>Conan</i> • Producer and creator of <i>Sleight of Mouth</i> magic-comedy show on <i>Comedy Central</i> • Host on <i>Cupcake Wars</i> on the <i>Food Network</i> and <i>Win, Lose, or Draw</i> on <i>The Disney Channel</i> • Actor on <i>The Suite Life on Deck</i> on <i>The Disney Channel</i>
Doug McKenzie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected to work with David Copperfield to develop magic for his <i>Tornado of Fire</i> television special • Producer of two seasons of Marco Tempest's <i>The Virtual Magician</i> television series airing in 50 different countries, David Blaine's <i>Real or Magic</i> television special, Dynamo's <i>Magician Impossible</i> series in the United Kingdom, and <i>Mat Franco's Got Magic</i> in the United States • Keynote speaker for New York University and Princeton University • Founding partner of <i>Pandora Group</i>, a boutique experience marketing firm using magic to advertise products

The Importance of Innovation

“In truth, the only restrictions on our capacity to astonish ourselves and each other are imposed by our own minds.” – David Blaine

There are many theories and concepts regarding creativity, however I focused on the ones that I believe were most relevant to this study. According to Babu R. Ranga, his research in *Role of Creativity and Innovation in Entrepreneurship* (2013) states that creativity is not creating something completely new, but rather adapting existing ideas and applying different knowledge mark creativity. He further says that innovation is a combination between creativity and risk taking. Standing out from the competition is critical if a business wants to be successful. Whether it comes from the new marketing campaign, the company’s new way to process financial information, or a new feature in product development, any sort of competitive advantage roots from creativity regardless where the competitive edge is within the business. A company must understand the necessary strategies to learn how to create new ideas and innovate if they want to be successful in the industry and stand out.

Ranga continues to expand on the types of innovation. For example, he states there are different types of innovation listed below (Table 3 – Ranga’s Forms of Innovation):

Table 3 – Ranga’s Forms of Innovation

<i>Ranga’s Forms of Innovation</i>	Description
Processes	Including the changes and improvement to methods. These contribute to increase in productivity, which lowers cost and helps to increase demand.
Products / Services	While progressive innovation is predominant, radical innovation opens up new markets. These lead to increases in effective demand, which encourages increases in investment and employment.
Management and Work Organization	This includes the exploitation of human resources, together with the capacity to anticipate techniques.

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In addition, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, author of *Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (1996), believes there are three systems of creativity, the first being the domain, which is nested in culture. This is the symbolic knowledge by a certain society or humanity as a whole, such as visual arts. The second system is the field, which are the “gatekeepers” (such as art critics, art teachers, curators of museums, etc), who work directly in the “creative field.” Finally, the individual person is the last system. The individual uses the symbols of the given domain (such as music, engineering, business, mathematics, etc.) and creates a new idea or sees a new pattern within it. He believes that in order to be considered “creative”, a person or type of work must satisfy all three areas. First, the individual must “master” the domain, followed by providing the work to the “gatekeeper”, and finally being approved or disapproved by the “experts”.

Robert E. Franken also believes there are three primary reasons people are motivated to be creative. In his book *Human Motivation* (1982), he states people need to have a complex stimulus, need to communicate their ideas and values, and need to solve problems that arise in their day-to-day lives.

Finally, Teresa Amabile’s study in Harvard Business School discusses creativity in her work titled *Componential Theory of Creativity* in 2012. This theory states that creativity is the highest when 1) an intrinsically motivated person with 2) high domain expertise and 3) high skill in creative thinking 4) works in an environment high in supports for creativity.

In regard to my research, I have made the conclusion that the importance of creativity is to grow as an individual or group in order to achieve things that may not have been possible beforehand. It is crucial to create a culture in the workplace that encourages creativity. For instance, in the book *Innovate the Pixar Way* by Bill Capodagli and Lynn Jackson (2010), it states that even though companies are encouraged to be innovative, it can lead to an increase in cost and variation. For instance, after the newest iPod, flat screen TV or laptop is developed, creativity is then ignored and businesses then focus on reducing costs again. However, they believe the “trick” to be

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innovative is to also be profitable. They state “Most (businesses) find it difficult, if not impossible, to emphasize creativity and innovation while controlling costs for the long run.” They use the following questions to establish a creative company:

- (1) How do you build an organization that embraces change and delivers an innovative, fairly priced, high-quality and profitable product?
- (2) How do you establish a culture of creativity in which the talents and abilities of all are nurtured and honed with great care?
- (3) How do you unleash the creative genius within your employees and still meet budgets and deadlines?
- (4) How do you establish an environment that awakens dreams?

Pixar, one of the most successful creative and successful companies worldwide, believes if a business leader can successfully answer those questions in a meaningful way, company innovation will occur, which will lead to success.

Innovation Within the Magic Industry

“Magicians have done controlled testing in human perception for thousands of years.” - Teller

Background: The History and Taxonomy of Magic

In order for a reader to fully understand the scope of this capstone, it is important to know the fundamentals and taxonomy of magic. This is important because it allows the reader to enter the mind of the magician and understand the context of the research.

Magic is not about tricks or fooling people - magic is about connecting with people and altering their perceptions on life in an entertaining way. According to *Attention and Awareness in Stage Magic: Turning Tricks into Research* by Mac King (2008), magicians do things that are outside laws of nature, but unlike psychics, magicians claim they do not have powers.

Principles of Magic

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There are two principles of a magic trick according to Ronald A. Rensink and Gustav Kuhn in their work titled *A Framework for Using Magic to Study the Mind* (2015): the *effect* and the *method*. In addition, Jehangir Bhowmagary, author of *Creativity of the Magician* (1972), states there are two types of principles in magic as well, but describes them in a different way. Bhowmagary's principles are more focused on the "method", in which Rensink and Kuhn described, yet can be applicable to the "effect" as well. Below you will the differences between both theories (Table 4 – Principles of Magic):

Table 4 – Principles of Magic

Principles - Ronald A. Rensink and Gustav Kuhn (2015)	Description
(1) Effect	The phenomena consciously experienced by the spectator
(2) Method	The manipulations used by the magician to achieve the effect
Principles - Jehangir Bhowmagary (1972)	Description
(1) Physical	This refers to sleight of hand mechanics in order to perform the effect and the
(2) Psychological	This refers to the verbal and nonverbal techniques magicians use to make the thing, yet that one thing may not necessarily be true or happening

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Trick Classifications

Every magic trick can be classified into a type of trick. The classification of tricks help magicians develop new routines since each of their routines can fall under one or more of the classifications. These are also known as the “fundamentals of magic” and the more understanding of the taxonomy a magician knows, the easier it is to develop new tricks and/or routines.

Since there are debates regarding specific trick arrangements, I have analyzed past taxonomy classifications. Some people enjoy or have a preference of one type of magic over another. Many historians believe there have been arguments over the categories of magic tricks because many can be overlapped into other categories. For instance, if you have a coin in one hand, close your hand, and then re-open it and the coin has travelled to the other hand, would that be: (1) Appearance, (2) Disappearance or (3) Teleportation? Even though that is a simple example of a trick, many tricks can be categorized into multiple categories, and as a result, some magicians only use one category for a multi-categorized routine. However, I have provided below the overarching themes of tricks and effects a magician might perform. I have put them in chronological order so you can see how classifications have changed over the years. I do understand there may have been other classifications throughout history, however I have only focused on a few taxonomies so the reader may understand the overall concept of magic:

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Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin created six branches of magic in 1878 with his book *Secrets of Conjuring and Magic Or How to Become a Wizard* (Table 5 – Taxonomy of Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, 1878):

Table 5 - Taxonomy of Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, 1878

<i>Taxonomy of Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, 1878</i>	Description
(1) Feats of Dexterity	This involves sleight of hand and manipulating objects
(2) Experiments in Natural Magic	Combined with “Feats of Dexterity”, the method would come from a scientific explanation
(3) Mental Conjuring	Mind-reading or ways to acquire secret information about the audience
(4) Pretended Mesmerism	Hypnosis or putting the audience member into a trance
(5) The Medium Business	This includes talking to spirits
(6) Parlour Magic	Any type of magic that does not fall into these categories

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In 1972, Jehangir Bhowmagary believed there were seven types of “theories” or types of tricks (*Table 7 – Taxonomy of Jehangir Bhowmagary, 1972*):

Table 7 - Taxonomy - Jehangir Bhowmagary, 1972

<i>Taxonomy - Jehangir Bhowmagary, 1972</i>	Description
(1) Appearance	Any type of object that appears out of “nowhere”
(2) Disappearance	Any type of object that disappears
(3) Transposition, Exchange, and Escape	When an object can either trade places with another object or escape from a restricted area without explanation
(4) Destruction, Mutilation, and Restoration	When an object is destroyed, yet somehow the performer restores it back together as the original object
(5) Transformation	When an object transforms into another object
(6) Levitation	When an object or person can float in mid-air
(7) Divination	Controlling an object with telekinesis, reading the spectator’ mind, or

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Dr. Peter Lamont and Professor Richard Wiseman created another taxonomy of magic tricks including nine categories. Lamon is a professional magician and Research Fellow at the University of Edinburg. He is also the former President of the Edinburgh Magic Castle. Additionally, Wiseman leads the psychology research unit at the University of Hertfodshire and is a member of the Magic Circle. According to Lamont and Wiseman, “there has been little agreement on the most appropriate classification system” however, in Lamont and Wiseman’s book, *Magic in Theory: An Introduction to the Theoretical and Psychological Elements of Conjuring* (1999), they combined past classifications to make only nine classifications that covered “everything” (Table 8 – Taxonomy of Dr. Peter Lamont and Professor Richard Wiseman, 1999):

Table 8 – Taxonomy of Dr. Peter Lamont and Professor Richard Wiseman, 1999

<i>Taxonomy of Dr. Peter Lamont and Professor Richard Wiseman, 1999</i>	Description
(1) Appearance	An object appears where it was not. A famous example is the production of a rabbit from a hat. John Henry Anderson was known for performing this when top hats were a normal attire, thus a natural prop
(2) Vanish	An object disappears from where it was. A famous example is taking a spectator’s coin and making it vanish with your hands. A most recent example is entrepreneurial-magician David Copperfield . He combined culture and magic when he made the Statue of Liberty disappear

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<p>(3) Transposition</p>	<p>An object changes position in space. An example of this would be an effect called “Coins Across” where coins invisibly travel from one hand to another. Another famous example would be the “Substitution Trunk” where the magician and assistant magically switch places when the assistant was locked up in a trunk. This is also known as teleportation.</p>
<p>(4) Transformation</p>	<p>An object changes from its natural state to another object. This could include size, colour, shape, weight, or entire different object. A popular example is the “Colour-Changing Deck” where at first all the backs of the cards are blue and then at the end of the trick they are red.</p>
<p>(5) Penetration</p>	<p>A solid piece of matter goes through another solid piece of matter. A famous example would be the “Linking Rings” where large silver rings magically pass through each other. Houdini made this popular when he walked through a brick wall on stage and appeared on the other side.</p>
<p>(6) Restoration</p>	<p>An object is damaged and restored to its original condition. A famous example would be the “Cut and Restored Rope” or the “Torn and Restored Newspaper.” Another example would be cutting a person in half on stage in a box and putting the person back together.</p>

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<p>(7) Extraordinary Feats - (a) Mental and (b) Physical</p>	<p>Mental Extraordinary Feats include feats of memory or rapid calculation of numbers. A Physical Mental Extraordinary Feat may include “super strength” or doing something extremely harmful to your body, but your body can handle the extraordinary pain.</p>
<p>(8) Telekinesis</p>	<p>The ability to control movement of objects without physical contact. This would include levitating an object or making an object move without anyone touching it</p>
<p>(9) Extrasensory Perception (ESP)</p>	<p>(1) Clairvoyance - Knowing a location of a certain object under an impossible situation (2) Telepathy - Knowing information from others in impossible scenarios. This would include reading a person’s mind (3) Precognition - Predicting the outcome of a future event (4) - Mental Control - Controlling another person’s mind. This would include forcing someone to select a specific object without the spectator knowing they are being forced or influenced</p>

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According to the American Museum of Magic, there are five different types of “Performance Magic” (Table 9 – Taxonomy of the American Museum of Magic, 2013):

Table 9 - Taxonomy of American Museum of Magic, 2013

<i>Taxonomy of American Museum of Magic, 2013</i>	Description
(1) Illusion	A stage trick involving people or animals. Examples they have provided are “levitating a person” or “vanishing an elephant.” An advantage of performing a large illusion is that it helps perform magic for large crowds of people.
(2) Manipulation	Any type of small object appearing, disappearing, transforming, and/or teleporting can be considered manipulation. Any type of sleight of hand could be considered manipulation, yet the magician must successfully combine “psychology, timing, misdirection, and natural choreography to produce the intended effect.” One of the most famous “manipulators” was Cardini and he was a master in manipulating “playing cards, cigarettes, and billiard balls”
(3) Close-Up	This type of magic occurs no more than five feet away from the spectator. Since the audience is close to the performer, sleight of hand and misdirection is an important factor to take into consideration. This may include any type of magic at restaurants, cocktail parties, or even small theatres.

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(4) Escapes	This includes getting out of handcuffs, ropes, straightjackets, or prison cells. The person who is most commonly famous for this is Houdini . However, the Davenport Brothers made this popular in the nineteenth century when they freed themselves from restraints when they claimed spirits assisted them.
(5) Mentalism	This type of magic consists of mind reading, controlling actions and thoughts, and being able to predict events. According to the American Museum of Magic, Joseph Dunninger brought mentalism into light when he performed on the radio and television. In addition, the Amazing Kreskin predicts future events in the modern day of magic. However, the most popular names today are Derren Brown and Max Maven . Mentalism has grown to be popular and that is why many magicians now have at least one type of mentalism trick in their routines and shows.

After researching past taxonomy models and discussing the taxonomy of magic tricks with my interviewees, I have developed 10 main categories of magic tricks, which are below. I decided to categorize the fundamentals in the following way as a result of combining past research (taxonomies) and the interview footage I collected (their perspectives on trick classifications). I do understand based off a specific trick or routine a magician performs, some can be overlapped (Table 10 – Taxonomy of John Duke Logan, 2016):

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Table 10 - Taxonomy of John Duke Logan, 2016

<i>Taxonomy of John Duke Logan, 2016</i>	Description
(1) Appearance	Making an object appear
(2) Disappearance	Making an object disappear
(3) Teleportation	Making two objects change places
(4) Transformation	Making an object turn into another object
(5) Restoration	Making a damaged object back to normal again
(6) Diffusion	Making a solid object pass through another solid object
(7) Mentalism	Reading someone's mind, predicting a future event, or making an object move without touching it
(8) In-Human Feats	Doing something physically with your body that a human would not be able to do normally
(9) Sensory Alterations	Altering the five senses to work, not work, or be

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	mixed up (hear, see, touch, taste, smell)
(10) Levitation	Suspending an object in mid-air

The Importance of Innovation within the Magic Industry

There are only a certain amount of tricks a magician can do according to the taxonomies. Some may view this as a good or bad thing. Regardless, it is important that magicians are creative with their work taking into consideration the limitations they have, but how does one “be creative” in the magic industry?

There was a study conducted in 2014 titled *Expertise Among Professional Magicians: An Interview Study* conducted by Petteri PitkNen, Antti Juvonen, Gustav Kuhn and Kai Hakkarainen, which analyzed the popularity and success of Finnish magicians. In their study, they interviewed Finland’s most highly regarded magicians (16 total) while asking questions about their professional magic careers and how they got started. The main goal of this study was to determine what constitutes as being a “successful” magician compared to other types of expertise. Their findings showed that compared with other types of interests or hobbies, magic is mostly self-taught. In other words, there is not a “formal training” process.

However, one of their findings also indicated that being well known in the magic industry or public isn’t necessarily based off age or duration of practice, rather the creativity you bring to the magic industry. Additionally, in their Discussion Section, they say “Magicians are entrepreneurs who have to make their living by personally creating their own brand and reputation in a very small and competitive market. In order to survive professionally, magicians have to master various domains of magic and cultivate versatile performance skills”, followed by “Integrating different tricks and practices often provides unforeseen creative opportunities, fostering innovation and transformation of performances, which expand the magician's repertoire.”

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They also stated that, “Combining unexpected routines may also inspire curiosity for developing new ideas. This creation of new effects may come from a desire to investigate or explore novelty-seeking opportunities, or merely a happy coincidence.” In other words, magic is different than other types of entertainment fields because since there are so many tricks available to perform, a magician needs to stand out with her or her creativity. Additionally, they must keep a secret in order to be successful, thus not revealing methods to the audience. As a result, this form of “secrecy” of creativity will help them entertain their audiences in order stand out in the field, which is the main finding of this study: in order to be well known in the field of magic, you must create tricks that are *unique* and that have never been performed before since the *types of tricks you can do are limited* (referring to the taxonomy and fundamentals of magic).

According to this study, since magic is limited to types of tricks you can accomplish, magicians must always be thinking outside the box in order to take one type of taxonomy and make it creative enough in order to be remembered by their audience. Therefore, creativity is one of the most important components if you want to be remembered as a magician, which can easily be applicable to a business setting.

How Psychology Helps with Magic Innovation

After analyzing the topic more in depth, I have realized the *real* reason magicians are successful at entertainment: they *understand* people. Alex Stone, who is the author of *Fooling Houdini* in 2013, states, “You could learn so much about the human mind through magic. Creativity is about questioning assumptions.... every kind of creative endeavor is a sort of magic trick. The ideas that support magic are really about connecting things you wouldn’t expect to be connect or decoupling two things. You’re creatively reconstructing something in a different way.”

Additionally, according to Jerry Kolber, who is the Executive Producer for *Brain Games*, magicians have a strong understanding of how the brain works. More

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specifically, he says, “We realized early on that, after neuroscientists, magicians are probably second in terms of their ability to understand and work with the human brain. That’s a potent and rich space for us to play in, and it still has the power to amaze.”

In this case, it further proves that a magician’s main focus isn’t fooling their audience member, rather understanding how they think, adapting in the correct situation based off their behavior, and performing something that suits their audience’s point of view on life. This is exactly how an entrepreneur should think as well.

Notable Creative Magicians Throughout History

It can be difficult to find the most creative, influential, or successful magicians of “all time” because each brings their own strategy to the table. Each magician and performer has a different technique in which they inspire their audience. In my interviews, I have also asked whom they (the interviewee) believe the greatest “magicians” were of all time and the results showed there was no consistent pattern. They all believe it is based off personal preference.

However, Mitt Larsen, who is the found of the *Magic Castle*, developed a list of who he believes are the greatest magicians of all time in 2006. Some criteria may be based off how much money the magician has made, how popular/well-liked (s)he is with the public, and/or how popular/well-liked (s)he is within the magic industry. It may also be based off their type of performance and their contributions to the magic industry throughout history (Table 11 – Popular Magicians from Mitt Larsen).

It should be noted that some of those entrepreneurial magicians were born more than 100 years ago. Again, it is difficult to say who are the most influential magicians of “all time” since their culture and resources were different. This reinforces the idea that culture and resources impacts the magic industry, just as it does with businesses and marketers with resource allocation.

Additionally, in Table 12 (Popular Magicians from Wayne Kawamoto) Wayne Kawamoto has put a list together of who he believes the Top Ten Most Influential Magicians of the twenty first century are. Kawamoto is also the author of *Picture*

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Yourself As a Magician (2008). I have put a star next to those magicians who appear on both lists.

Table 11 – Popular Magicians from Mitt Larsen

Name	Significance
(1) Harry Houdini	His main reputation was escapes , yet many people debate if he was actually a magician. He wanted to be known as the “King of Cards” and the “King of Handcuffs” but when he started to focus on escapes, the card tricks started to fade out. It fit his persona and that is how he became so entertaining. He was born in 1874 and performed for the later part of the 1800s and the early parts of the 1900s. He could escape from chains, jail cells, ropes, handcuffs, and packaged boxes. He eventually died in 1926, however his marketing strategy was strictly on word-of-mouth with publicity stunts . He was successful because he would conduct his escapes outside in front of a large audience conducting one of the first “publicity stunts.” His marketing skills back then made him the most talked about “magician” (or entertainer) till this day.
(2) Dante	When Dante died in 1955, the “ Golden Age of Magic ” came to an end. Stage magic ^{magicians} slowly faded out and he became known as the number one magician in the country at the time.
(3) Harry Blackstone Sr.	He was Houdini’s rival in escapes. His brother, Peter, and himself ^{would} country putting on stage shows. His main repertoire was large-scale illusion shows . He also became popular for vanishing a horse . Since a horse was the main way of transportation when he was alive (1885 - 1965), it would be equivalent to making a car vanishing on stage now. His skills of taking every day objects and combining them into a stage show made

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	him unique.
* (4) Doug Henning	Doug Henning was the first magician who focused on theatre . He produced a show called “Spellbound” which combined story, music, and magic . In 1970, he took the show to Broadway where it was renamed “The Magic Show” and he won a Tony Award nomination for his work. In 1975 he won an Emmy and was nominated for seven for his magic special on NBC. His appearance was tie-dyed shirts and long hair and started to shift the “traditional magician” stereotype into something different . However, he soon moved to transcendental meditation and started to work for the maharishi.
(5) Richiardi	Also known as Aldo Izquierdo, he was known as bringing a dramatic presentation to stage illusions . He was known as using fake blood when he “sawed” his assistant in half or other techniques to give the impression that he was actually cutting his assistant . As a result, TIME Magazine ranked him as one of the top earning stage shows in New York. His realistic and “gory” approach to magic made people question what he was doing was actually real or not.
(6) Tihany	He created one of the world’s most successful circus and tent magic shows . He won the Performing Fellowship from the Academy of Magical Arts in 1978 and the Masters Fellowship in 1987. Even though he is best known for his circus and tent acts, he brought other performers together that vary in talent into one big show so the audience could see various acts (jugglers, dancers, clowns, acrobats, etc)
	He is known as producing “Magic Land of Allakazam” which would air nationally every Saturday morning on CBS and ABC . This show

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<p>* (7) Mark Wilson</p>	<p>lasted for five years and he performed over 200 illusions. He was awarded “Magician of the Year” by The Academy of Magical Arts in 1972. He also wrote “Mark Wilson’s Course in Magic” which is the number one ranked book for beginning magicians and has sold over 800,000 copies. According to the <i>New York Times</i>, he is recognized as “the nation’s leading authority on magic.”</p>
<p>* (8) Siegfried & Roy</p>	<p>They are known as one of the best magic duo of all time where they have performed for over thirty years to approximately 25 million people. They started to perform in Germany and slowly came over to the United States. Their big break occurred when they had a gig at the Monte Carlo casino and a representative asked if they would like to have their own Las Vegas show. Their show soon had a cast and crew of 250 and over 5,000. However, a tiger bit Roy in 2003 and they had to retire. They are best known as using animals in their acts and doing large stage illusions with them.</p>
<p>* (9) Lance Burton</p>	<p>Burton won the “Gold Medal for Excellence” from the International Brotherhood of Magicians right after his 20th birthday. In addition, he won the Grand Prize at FISM (Federation International Society de Magie) in Switzerland. He was the first American and the youngest performer to be given that award. In 1994, Burton entered a 13-year contract at the Monte Carlo Resort & Casino in 1996 and the \$27 million Lance Burton Theatre was built just for him. This contract was the longest contract ever given to any entertainer in Las Vegas. He is known for his communication skills and dedication at a young age.</p>
	<p>Born in 1894, he is also known as “The Professor.” He was a master in sleight of hand manipulation and</p>

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(10) Dai Vernon	magic theory. He is known for keeping his secrets to himself, but performing “incredible” feats using ordinary objects. His goal was to make sure everything looked natural, even though sleight of hand was occurring.
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Table 12 - Popular Magicians from Wayne Kawamoto

Name	Significance
(1) David Copperfield	He has a gift of storytelling through magic, which makes him the number one commercial magician of all time. He can perform stage and close up and emphasizes on imagination.
* (2) Doug Henning	Doug Henning was the first magician who focused on theatre. He produced a show called “ Spellbound ” which combined story, music, and magic. In 1970, he took the show to Broadway where it was renamed “The Magic Show” and he won a Tony Award nomination for his work. In 1975 he won an Emmy and was nominated for seven for his magic special on NBC. His appearance was tie-dyed shirts and long hair and started to shift the “traditional magician” stereotype into something different. However, he soon shifted to transcendental meditation and started to work for the maharishi.
* (3) Siegfried & Roy	They are known as one of the best magic duo of all time where they have performed for over thirty years to approximately 25 million people. They started to perform in Germany and slowly came over to the United States. Their big break occurred when they had a gig at the Monte Carlo casino and a representative asked if they would like to have their own Las Vegas

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	<p>show. Their show soon had a cast and crew of 250 and over 5,000. However, a tiger bit Roy in 2003 and they had to retire. They are best known as using animals in their acts and doing large stage illusions with them.</p>
<p>* (4) Lance Burton</p>	<p>Burton won the “Gold Medal for Excellence” from the International Brotherhood of Magicians right after his 20th birthday. In addition, he won the Grand Prize at FISM (Federation International Society de Magie) in Switzerland. He was the first American and the youngest performer to be given that award. In 1994, Burton entered a 13-year contract at the Monte Carlo Resort & Casino in 1996 and the \$27 million Lance Burton Theatre was built just for him. This contract was the longest contract ever given to any entertainer in Las Vegas. He is known for his communication skills and dedication at a young age.</p>
<p>(5) Ricky Jay</p>	<p>Known as looking at magic from a deception point of view, his main focus is to understand magic in an illegal level, such as cheating. However, his goal is to turn that concept into an entertainment form. He is also an expert in the history and theory of magic.</p>
<p>* (6) Mark Wilson</p>	<p>He is known as producing “Magic Land of Allakazam” which would air nationally every Saturday morning on CBS and ABC. This show lasted for five years and he performed over 200 illusions. He was awarded “Magician of the Year” by The Academy of Magical Arts in 1972. He also wrote “Mark Wilson’s Course in Magic” which is the number one ranked book for beginning magicians and has sold over 800,000 copies. He is best known to educate and teach magic for people through lectures and seminars. According to the <i>New York Times</i>, he is recognized as “the nation’s leading authority on</p>

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	magic.”
(7) Penn and Teller	Their unique style of a dynamic duo show, yet only one of the performer talks , is innovative and different. They combine comedy into their magic by pretending they are teaching you a trick, yet they have a different twist at the end.
(8) Harry Anderson	He created a “ con man ” persona and was known for his comedy magic in nightclubs and television.
(9) Jeff McBride	He uses magic as a theatrical art form and is one of the most well respected teachers of magic. He has a specific mask that he uses in his show and his brand.
(10) Cyril Takayama	He takes old concepts and brings them into a modern look to even fool magicians. Even though he is from Japan, his visually appealing magic makes him globally known.

Creative Television Tactics to Enhance Transparency with Non-Magicians

When television was created, theatre shows started to fade away as the main source for entertainment. More specifically, there has been a dramatic shift of magic on television in the last twenty years (in the ***Notable Creative Magicians Throughout History Section***, I discuss some of the entrepreneurial magicians in the television industry – not solely for the past twenty years -- who have helped increase this transparency with magicians and the general public).

Between 1990 and 2005, the only magic-related television shows were *David Blaine’s Street Magic* and *Criss Angel’s Mindfreak*. David Blaine and Criss Angel focused on reactions rather than the tricks themselves. They broke the “stereotypes” (bunny, top

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hat, magic wand, etc) of magic and helped give magic the modern-day look. Blaine wore jeans and a t-shirt where Angel took a “goth” type of look to his presentation.

Over the past ten years, more networks are producing magic-related shows, yet the format in which it is portrayed is different. Historically, David Blaine and Criss Angel’s show were based on approaching strangers and performing magic tricks, but nowadays magicians have been creative with the concept of performing magic. Below are the top television shows that have emerged over the past twenty years that have to do with magic. These shows use specific creativity techniques to help the transparency between the magic industry and the general public (Table 13 – Modern Magic Television Shows):

Table 13 – Modern Magic Television Shows

Name of Television Show	Year Created	Description
<i>Penn & Teller’s Fool Us</i>	2011	This was first aired on June 18th, 2011 and it is still on air. It provides <i>The CW Network</i> it’s highest ratings in that time slot compared to five years ago. In this television show, magicians must perform on stage in front of an audience, which includes Penn & Teller. If Penn and Teller cannot figure out the method to the performer’s trick, then that performer will open up for Penn & Teller at their Vegas show.
<i>Brain Games</i>	2011	<i>Brain Games</i> shows the psychology behind magic and how the human brain processes information. More specifically, Common Sense Media states it demonstrates “how we process information, perceive our surroundings, and respond to

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		<p>stimuli, as demonstrated by experiments, optical illusions, and brain teasers that encourage audience participation.” According to the <i>Hollywood Reporter</i>, the debut in 2011 brought in “an average of 1.5 million viewers over two episodes” which marked the premier high for any National Geographic original.</p>
<p><i>The Carbonaro Effect</i></p>	<p>2014</p>	<p>This show is still a magic-based show, yet it is a prank show as well. Magician-prankster Michael Carbonaro performs magic tricks to people using everyday objects in everyday activities, but he never tells the spectator he is a magician, which makes it a hidden camera comedy show. The second episode had a 40% increase in viewership compared to the pilot episode at brings it 699,000 viewers. It is listed in the Top Five truTV’s 10:00pm time slot among adults aged 18-34.</p>

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<i>Wizard Wars</i>	2014	Wizard Wars is a show where teams of two magicians face-off with each other in a tournament-style magic competition. Two teams of duo magicians have certain objects that their tricks must be based off of and must perform a two to five minute routine for judges (Penn Jillette, Teller, Christen Gerhart, Justin Flom, Ellen Fox, Jason Latimer, David Shimshi, and Gregory Wilson). In September of 2014, SyFy has “ordered six additional one-hour episodes” and their debut brought in “one million Live +SD total viewers.... growing substantially in the timeslot from previous weeks and year-to-year” according to TV By the Numbers.
<i>NBC’s Mat Franco’s Got Magic</i>	2015	The winner of the ninth season of <i>America’s Got Talent</i> recently aired his own show. This looked at Mat Franco performing magic for strangers on the street. Franco’s show brought in 4.66 million viewers, which was the fourth highest viewed show on the television the Thursday night it premiered, out of ten shows according to TV Series Finale.

Using television shows to demonstrate magic never seems to “disappear” and all viewers are constantly intrigued by it. Even though technology and special effects for media have increased over the years (inspired by magicians), viewers still enjoy the authenticity of taking an ordinary object and doing something extraordinary with it knowing there are no special effects. As viewers, we see special effects create

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impossible scenarios in television shows, films, and movies, and we know that is “fake” and using technology. However, magicians strip away that concept and truly show something people haven’t seen before without using special effects.

According to Chris Linn, President of Head Programming at truTV in 2014, “In a cluttered television landscape, magic shows can grab and hold attention because audiences love to be let in on the secret that something is about to happen. They delight in the surprising response and then want to be the first to share what they’ve discovered.”

Additionally, Justin Rosenblatt, Senior Vice President of Alternative Programming at the CW, noted, “Magic is timeless, crosses demographic, is constantly unpredictable, and continues to evolve creatively. It’s a classic form of entertainment.” Rosenblatt is correct in stating that all demographics enjoy magic because it is unpredictable, it becomes more creative, and we can get that sense of “wonder” the audience inside the screen can feel as well. It makes it seem as though we are there *with* the magician, even though we are on our couch in our living room.

According to Tony Reynolds, Producer of *A Second Chance with Ted Williams* (2014), producing a magic show on television is relatively inexpensive, yet can have a long-term positive ROI. For instance, he says that if someone is producing a magic show, based on the experience of the performer, all you would need is a deck of cards, which costs less than five dollars. In addition, all you would also need a magician, inexpensive locations, two to three cameramen, and everyday objects to do the magic with. Make-up or hair is not necessary, which would add costs if someone were producing another type of show. For instance, the pilot episode for *Wizard Wars* only cost \$15 on YouTube.

Magician Rob Zabrecky, who is in the process of filming and producing two magic-themed shows, believes networks are always looking for ways to incorporate magic into their channels. According to Zabrecky, he believes “the influx is that we’re seeing a variety of magic we didn’t see before, which is really good for magic as a whole. Until recently, I’d guess that most people thought magic was David Blaine or David

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Copperfield or Criss Angel. That's kind of like saying rock and roll is comprised of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Elvis."

Rob Zabrecky also says, "With these (magic television) shows, we're seeing that magic isn't so much about doing a trick (because the audience can easily 'Google' it); it's about personality, point of view, artistry and craft, which I'm not sure people knew before." In other words, Zabrecky is stating that magic isn't just about the trick - it's about the experience and what the performer gives off that the audience can feel.

According to the previously noted taxonomies of magic, there is a limit on how many "types" of tricks a magician can perform. Not only does this demonstrate that communication skills are important in any type of environment, but also why creativity – such as the different *types* of magic shows (since one is limited on certain taxonomies) – can help someone be successful.

The trend I continue to see through my research is that magic isn't necessarily about "tricking" the audience, but rather *connecting* and *communicating* with the audience. More specifically, as I conducted my interviews, every single magician responded that magic, at its core, is about relationship building. The most creative magicians throughout history built a true relationship with their audience members and constructed a bond -- which made the audience enjoy their performances better -- resulting in more success for the magician. They also believed that when it comes down to it, the most effective way to connect with the audience is to have successful communication skills. Communication is not only important for magicians, but also important for businesses as well.

The Importance of Communication

"I try to help people realize their dreams by using magic to tell stories that educate, move, and inspire." – David Copperfield

According to Adler and Towne in 1978, "communication is important since everything we have achieved is based off effective communication and every emotion or message we wish to share with the world is a form of communication." In addition,

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psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1970 suggests the ability to satisfy personal needs arises from the ability to communicate. In other words, successful communication is extremely important to survive in life in general.

A business is the activity of producing, selling, or buying goods in exchange for money. In order to have a successful business, you must have effective communication, which is why this research was conducted. For example, a business must be able to have techniques to know if a client is actually interested in them or not, understanding employee/customer needs, and/or letting the company know what their goals are.

Verbal v. Non-Verbal Communication

According to Stephen E. Lucas, author of *The Art of Speaking* (2012), “delivery is a matter of nonverbal communication (and) you can use nonverbal communication to deliver your speeches effectively and to increase the impact of your verbal message” (p. 240). In other words, *verbal communication is the actual message the audience should hear*, while *nonverbal communication* is “communication based on a *person’s use of voice and body, rather than on the use of words*” (p. 240). This may include your body and/or voice to convey the message expressed by the words.

Non-Verbal Communication: How You Speak

Instead of directing the attention on the words, successful delivery allows the speaker’s ideas to be heard in the perspective he or she wants them to be heard. According to Lucas, in order to have the message heard, a person must work on the following:

1. Volume - loudness of your voice
2. Pitch - highness/lowness of your voice
3. Rate - speed at which you talk
4. Pauses - when you stop talking

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5. Vocal Variety - change in volume, pitch, rate and pauses
6. Pronunciation - how you pronounce your words
7. Articulation - putting words in a specific order
8. Dialect - the words you use
9. Posture - the way your body is positioned
10. Personal Appearance - the way you are dressed or look
11. Facial Expression - the way your face looks during specific moments
12. Gestures - what you do with your hands while presenting
13. Eye Contact - looking into another person's eye when speaking

Additionally, according to the study conducted by communication researcher Albert Mehrabian in 1971, words create 7% of communication, tone of voice composes of 38% of communication, and body language composes 55% of communication. This proves that even though verbal communication is important, the nonverbal communication is more important in order to create effective communication.

Non-Verbal Communication: Body Language

Human beings create judgments on people how different body language and could potentially influence life outcomes. For instance, if a person was conducting an interview, the interviewee may say great content, yet his or her body language may turn someone off. In addition, the way you may look at someone when they are telling you information could show a level of mistrust or confusion, even if you are not doing it on purpose. There has been research on successful non-verbal communication strategies and techniques to use in order to connect with people, but it may vary depending on the individual. As a result, I have provided few examples below that may help and individual on connecting with others on an effective level using non-verbal communication:

An article titled *Nonverbal Communication – Improving Your Nonverbal Skills and Reading Body Language* authored by Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., Melinda Smith, M.A., Greg Boose, and Jaelline Jaffe, Ph.D in 2006 states there are six types of nonverbal

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communication and body language: facial expressions, body movements and posture, gestures, eye contact, touch, space, and voice.

(1) Facial Expressions – The human face is extremely expressive, able to express countless emotions without saying a word. And unlike some forms of nonverbal communication, facial expressions are universal. The facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear and disgust are the same across cultures.

(2) Body Movements and Posture - Consider how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself communicates a wealth of information to the world. This type of nonverbal communication includes your posture, bearing, stance, and subtle movements.

(3) Gestures - Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We wave, point, beckon, and use our hands when we're arguing or speaking animatedly—expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it's important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation.

(4) Eye Contact - Since the visual sense is dominant for most people, eye contact is an especially important type of nonverbal communication. The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction. Eye contact is also important in maintaining the flow of conversation and for gauging the other person's response.

(5) Touch - Think about the messages given by the following: a weak handshake, a timid tap on the shoulder, a warm bear hug, a reassuring slap on the back, a patronizing pat on the head, or a controlling grip on your arm.

(6) Space - Have you ever felt uncomfortable during a conversation because the other person was standing too close and invading your space? We all have

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a need for physical space, although that need differs depending on the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relationship. You can use physical space to communicate many different nonverbal messages, including signals of intimacy and affection, aggression or dominance.

(7) Voice - It's not just what you say, it's *how* you say it. When we speak, other people "read" our voices in addition to listening to our words. Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and sounds that convey understanding, such as "ahh" and "uh-huh." Think about how someone's tone of voice, for example, can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

Since non-verbal communication comes from your subconscious, it may be revealing your *true* emotions. For instance, if a person is saying a happy-related thought, but their body language does not confirm this, their verbal communication may not be true.

Additionally, non-verbal communication is a two-way street: the sender is using non-verbal communication to express their message and the receiver is using non-verbal communication as they are receiving the message. This is critical in any type of business setting, as a business leader must use effective non-verbal communication skills to effectively motivate their employees and employees may use non-verbal communication to try and "sell" the company to prospective clients, such as in an elevator pitch.

Nina Zipkin, author of *Make Them Trust You with These 5 Body Language Secrets* from Entrepreneur Magazine (2015), states the following techniques may assist you in a business setting:

- (1) Eyes Up and Alert – For maximum engagement, maintain as much eye contact and raise your eyebrows while you listen. Do not look near exit doors or other distractions, as it may come off as you are not interested in the conversation.

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- (2) Arm Yourself – Arms that are placed behind you can seem regal and distant, whereas arms across your chest could seem threatening. In order to look like a leader, keep your arms relaxed, open, and potentially lacing your fingers together in front of your body to show comfort and interest.
- (3) Tall and Proud - Where are your shoulders? If they're over your toes or your lap with your back curved into a C-shape, you'll seem uncomfortable in your own skin, turning people off. To convey confidence, hold your shoulders over your hips. Point your toes toward the person with whom you're speaking, not the door, and lean on nothing. Practicing power poses – like superhero stances with your arms akimbo and your legs in an 'A' shape – can even help boost confidence before your talk begins.
- (4) Mirror, Mirror - What's your partner doing? Mimic their stance to diffuse tension and connect. If they are sitting, sit at the same height. If they are standing, face the same direction. Aligning your pose with someone else's can help build rapport.
- (5) Don't Forget to Smile - Smiles put those around you at ease and signal to yourself that you're doing what you're supposed to. It may just help give you the confidence to land that client or nab that dream gig.

Breakthroughs in Communication

According to Hillol Kargupta in 2008, “one of the biggest breakthroughs in the history of mankind was the evolution of language for communication...and it is believed that the early forms of language evolved about 200,000 years ago in homosapiens. Then language started shaping up in the written form (and) cave painting started appearing around 30,000 BC” (p. 2). This helped humans communicate their thoughts to each other in the form of drawings and letters. However, humans wanted to expand communication over a larger ground. For instance, smoke signals and heliographs

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were then used, including courier-based postal systems in Egypt during 2400 BC. This would include writing a letter to someone specific that does not live near the other party and having it reach its destination.

In 2009, The History Channel states that between the 1830s and the 1840s, Samuel Morse invented the telegraph. In addition, it states the telegraph “worked by transmitting electrical signals over a wire laid between stations. Samuel Morse developed a code that assigned a set of dots and dashes to each letter of the English alphabet and allowed for simple transmission of complex messages across telegraph lines.” This created a more effective technique for military and government officials to reach each other with the correct information. However, in 1876 the telephone was created by Alexander Graham Bell. This was extremely beneficial for not only the government, but residents as well where they could now communicate with their family and friends (this also demonstrates his skill in creativity, as he was also an accomplished painter who then invented the telegraph).

It was not until the Internet where people could communicate to multiple people at once in different locations in a more effective manner. According to Evan Andrews, who writes for the History Channel (2013), “The first workable prototype of the Internet came in the late 1960s with the creation of ARPANET, of the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network...(allowing) multiple computers to communicate on a single network.” More specifically, it was in 1990 when Tim Beners-Lee invented the World Wide Web, which was the “most common means of accessing data online in the form of websites and hyperlinks.” The Internet and social media have caused communication to be “anytime, anywhere” while connecting people at a moment’s notice.

The Shift of Communication in Modern Business

Regarding business, according to Ray Kurzweil (2001) “we don’t experience 100 years of progress in the 21st century - it will be more like 20,000 years of progress (at today’s rate).” Ray Kurzeil is the author of the number 1 best selling book on Amazon in science titled *The Singularity is Near* and researches technology and futurism.

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Additionally, he notes, “One constant factor in the past 20 or 30 years has been continual change largely due to three interrelated forces: globalisation, the dramatic advances in information technology and industry consolidation.” Since technology is changing at this pace, this means business must be aware of this adaptation and change as needed.

In 2002, the Australian Government’s Department of Education, Science and Training released its Employability Skills for the Future, which outlined the key skills and personal attributes that employers look for in candidates. The Employability Skills Framework incorporates the following personal attributes that contribute to overall employability: loyalty, commitment, honesty and integrity, enthusiasm, reliability, personal presentation, common sense, positive self-esteem, sense of humour, balanced attitude to work and home life, ability to deal with pressure, motivation, and adaptability.

Additionally, Phillip Cenere identifies the key skills identified in conjunction with the personal attributes to make up the Employability Skills Framework in *Communication Skills for Business Professionals* (2015): communication skills that contribute to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers, teamwork skills that contribute to productive working relationships and outcomes, problem-solving skills that contribute to productive outcomes, initiative and enterprise skills that contribute to innovative outcomes, planning and organising skills that contribute to long- and short-term strategic planning, self-management skills that contribute to employee satisfaction and growth, learning skills that contribute to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes, and technology skills that contribute to the effective execution of tasks. In other words, these skills that employees are looking for all depend on effective communication skills.

Companies now must be able to create effective communication and marketing strategies in order to satisfy their customers, not just their employees. For example,

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outbound marketing is a marketing method where the marketer emphasizes a “one-sided” conversation, hoping the message will reach their target market. This may include cold calling or traditional marketing (newspaper ads, radio, pamphlets, etc.). However, *inbound* marketing creates a conversational-type of marketing where the marketer expresses their product or interest in the eyes of the consumer, and the company *focuses* on the needs and interests of the consumer. For instance, one may try and start a conversation with a customer already knowing they have an interest in the product or service, rather than quickly showing the customer the functions of the product or service.

One company in particular, HubSpot, who specializes in communications and inbound marketing, has over 11,500 customers and 1,900 partners. According to their statistics of State of the Inbound 2014-2015 Report, “companies, on average, save \$20,000 per year by investing more in inbound marketing vs. outbound marketing. In addition, 54% more leads are generated by inbound tactics than traditional paid marketing and twice as many marketers say inbound delivers below average cost per lead than outbound methods.” In other words, by investing more in *understanding* and *connecting* with the customer, companies are able to save and earn more money.

In addition, according to Gene Marks, President of the Marks Group, the communication skills he uses now changed dramatically since 1994. He believes a person must create a one-on-one connection with the customer and see what value you can bring to them rather than just showing the functional parts of the product or service. More specifically, in 2014 he states “Today’s business owner must be prepared to write long emails, tweet in less than 140 characters, post on Facebook, update on LinkedIn, speak to groups of hopeful employees or prospective customers, and be comfortable appearing on a Skype call, his company’s YouTube channel, or sitting down for an interview with the local TV station.” As a result, rather than using the main outbound communicational technique from twenty years ago (such as cold calling), one must adapt to building a relationship with their customers and learning different ways (and platforms) to achieve this.

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Challenges in Communication for the Modern Business World

The Conference Board surveyed 1,020 CEOs in 2014 about how they felt business was changing and what their challenges were. Below are the top five answers:

- (1) Human Capital
- (2) Customer Relationships
- (3) Innovation
- (4) Operational Excellence
- (5) Corporate Brand & Reputation

This research also states “The CEO Challenge survey finds business leaders across the globe are more focused on their business performance than in earlier years. The results show CEOs are zeroed in on not only what gets done, but more importantly how things get done; they are willing to take a hard look at their own organizational culture to ensure engagement, accountability, customer-centricity, agility, and ultimately outstanding performance” (p. 5).

Some of these traits may seem obvious to run a successful business, but in both surveys (the first being their challenges and second being what they focus on more) companies want to enhance the relationship they have with their customers. This proves that more than ever, CEOs and companies are focusing more on how they *connect* with people more effectively.

The techniques may have changed to connect with customers over the past few years, but the challenge to create value with customers remains the same. More specifically, Sales Force, who provides Customer Relationship Management, was created in 2004. In only ten years, it earned \$4 billion revenue and captured 20% of the CRM market.

Creative communication and marketing skills are essential to have a successful business, and business leaders are now doing whatever they can to maintain and create

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those types of relationships. Even though many of the communication methods are shifting to online platforms, it is both a good and bad thing for companies. The benefits are that companies can be more creative with their communication techniques using technology, but the downfalls are that when a person is face-to-face with other people, they do not know how to effectively communicate because of the technological change.

Communication in Magic

“This business, this combination of controlled movements, calculated words, studied posture, shifting attention, convincing and natural in appearance, is the process of interpretation for the spectators.” – Dariel Fitzkee

Magic is all about communicating with audience members, and magicians can figure out who is engaged by eye contact, facial expressions, and other verbal and nonverbal communication. Sleight of hand is important with some routines; but connecting with the audience is the most critical part. More specifically, if the magician is doing something “secret”, but must hide the method, it must look natural to the audience members.

How Magicians Take Advantage of Communication as a Process

Adler and Towne describe communication as a process. There are seven aspects in a basic communication interaction:

1. Sender
2. Encodes
3. Channel

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4. Message

5. Channel

6. Decodes

7. Receiver

The sender will develop a mental image, which includes ideas, thoughts, pictures, and/or emotion. The sender must develop the message into a form that the receiver can understand. In most cases, these symbols are words, but could also be pictures or sounds. This process of translating these images is called *encoding*.

Once the sender has encoded the message, the message must be delivered to the receiver. The channel is the way the message arrives, as this could be a face-to-face interaction, telephone, electronically, or any other means of sending a message. Three examples of channels are verbal, written, and visual media. When the other person finally receives the message, a *decoding* process begins, as the sender must encode the message that is being sent. The receiver must decode the message in a way that makes sense to them. If the receiver decoded the message *exactly* how the sender sent it, then the message has been sent successfully. However, if the message is not decoded exactly how it should have been, physical or psychological noise could have taken place.

Physical and Psychological Noise

Physical noises are distractions in the environment that may make it difficult to hear or pay attention. The sender, the message, the channel, or the receiver may be secondary compared to the primary distraction that is going on and may misinterpret the message.

Psychological noise occurs when individuals restrict the sender or receiver's ability to express and/or understand the message clearly. This could occur if the sender or

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receiver don't speak the same language or have some sort of stereotype or bias to the sender or receiver. In other words, it is the internal opinions and qualities of the sender or receiver that may influence the understanding of the message.

Having noise is not a good thing in a business setting. For instance, if a CEO tells an employee to contact a specific person by a certain due date, but the message is lost in noise, the company may lose money.

However, magicians take advantage of physical and psychological noise in the communication model when they perform a routine for entertainment purposes. For instance, if a magician is working with a gimmick that makes a sound when it is used, the magician may play music while he or she is performing to cover the sound, thus covering the secret. In this case, the magician is using physical noise as a way to distract his or her audience members from the *real* secret of how the trick is being accomplished.

Additionally, many magicians use different techniques for psychological noise when they perform. Examples of psychological noise that magicians may use would be to make the audience assume a hat is empty and then pull something out of it. For instance, if the performer was wearing a hat while walking around and talking, and then takes it off and pulls something out of it that wouldn't normally fit in a hat, the audience wouldn't understand where that object came from (which is good for the magician, hence the trick). Since the hat was on his or her head the entire time, the preconceived idea the audience had was that the hat was empty.

How New Communication Methods Impact Magicians

According to AdWeek.com in 2011, "over the course of the last ten years, the average attention span has dropped from 12 to 5 minutes", which has impacted the magic industry greatly. Since social media is constantly "in our face", the human brain wants to interpret information in a short, timely manner. Taking this into consideration, a magician cannot perform a long stage trick without some sort of interaction with the audience or the audience may lose attention in the show. This is why many magicians are performing tricks that are quick and visual. For instance, in the 1920s, a magic

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show would consist of theatrical music and cutting a person in half. Even though the trick itself would be impressive, the presentation would be five to ten minutes long for theatrical purposes. It would not seem like a long duration back then since that was the norm, but if the same routine was performed today, the audience may be bored after a few minutes. Magicians have to be quick and to the point, keeping the audience engaged throughout the entire routine, just as advertising trends suggest.

As of September 20th, 2015, according to *PenguinMagic.com*, one of the world's largest online retail magic stores, the top five selling tricks were (Table 14 – Top Five Penguin Magic Tricks):

Table 14 – Top Five Penguin Magic Tricks

Trick Name and Artist	Description of Trick from PenguinMagic.com
(1) Airtight by Jay Sankey	“A selected and signed card is lost in the deck. A spectator chooses a balloon and the magician holds it in his open hand. The magician slams the deck against the balloon and the deck literally becomes "sucked" into the balloon. The balloon is blown up and the cards are shuffled around inside. The magician now pinches the selected card through the wall of the balloon and visibly pulls it through to the outside. The balloon with cards and the signed selection are immediately given out as souvenirs of this truly remarkable magic experience.”
(2) Rip & Fold by Rick Lax	“Not only do 2 signed playing cards change PLACES, but they change STATE. And here's why the pros are raving: No setup, and you end clean. You can do this anytime, anywhere.”
(3) Binary Code by Rick Lax	“Remember the order of an entire deck in SECONDS. An incredible THREE-PHASE reputation maker.”

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(4) Tembus by Robert Bertrance	“This is a false shuffle using a regular deck of cards. It is a sophisticated and deceptive technique created by Kiko Pastur.”
(5) Energy Coins by Matt Mello	“Energy Coins is my personal coin bending routine. It consists of two phases, and two coins: one positive and one negative. The performer 'energizes' the negative coin, and the spectator is able to feel that it's heavier. This is one hundred percent surefire, and they will always feel what you describe. Once energized, the performer slowly picks up both coins and is able to dramatically bend the negative coin with one hand.”

From the descriptions of each trick, it is clear that these routines could potentially be performed in less than ten seconds. Having the Top Five Most Selling Tricks on the most popular magic online retail store shows how the shift in how our brain has processed information over history and how this has impacted the magic industry and the tricks magicians perform now for people. The tricks must be quick, visual, and to the point, just like communication.

The Importance of Communication Within the Magic Industry

Magicians use communication as a tool to connect with the audience members. Whether that is telling a story with the magic, instructing the spectator what to do, or providing context of the origin of the trick, magic is all about communicating. However, magicians also use “false” communication techniques to influence their audience. For instance, if a magician looks a spectator in the eye with effective eye contact, the magician could do something “secret” with their hands and use non-verbal

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communication as a distraction mechanism.

Dariel Fitzkee also touches upon this point in *Magic by Misdirection* in 1975. He writes, “The performer construes a series of happenings so that the spectator will understand it, as the performer's individuals’ interests require. It cannot be carelessly done. Great skill and nice judgment are necessary. The sequence of events must truly represent and express the action it seems to be. Any artificiality will destroy the sense the performer is trying to convey-any unnaturalness will reveal it to be false” (p. 37).

In other words, *magic tricks work because of the combination of calculated words and movements*, and as a result *everything must look natural*, even though the outcome is unnatural. Everything magicians do, from saying certain words, to moving their body in certain ways are calculated in advanced. It may not seem like anything special to the audience, but to the magician, it’s trial and error from past performances to make it perfect. Magic is about creating something *impossible* with natural and *possible* movements. If anything looks unnatural, the audience simply doesn’t believe in the “magical” moment.

Creating a False Reality Using Communication Strategies

If the magician can take the ordinary and make it extraordinary, it will alter the spectator’s mind and create a specific perception of what the *spectator* thinks is occurring compared to what is *actually* occurring. In 1972, Jehangir Bhowmagary discussed techniques magicians use to create a false reality for their audience using communication. For instance, he believes there are two types of “principles” of magic: physical and psychological. The physical aspects are broken down by the sleight of hand mechanics in order to perform the effect, which could require gimmicks. However, he also mentions that if the “secret moves” are hard for a performer to do, then they have to rely more psychological techniques for misdirection. Additionally, magicians may use gimmicks or special apparatuses that help them achieve a trick. A gimmick is a piece of machinery that looks normal to an audience member but it is built a special way so the magician can achieve a trick.

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The second principle mentioned is the psychological principle. For instance, if a magician is casually hitting the bottom of a glass with a wand and it makes a tap noise, the audience will assume the glass has a bottom. However, the magician could be making the noise with something else (to give the impression the glass has a bottom) and then cause an object to diffuse through the bottom (or at least the illusion it has).

Misdirection and Attention Control

Misdirection is known as being a magician's best friend. Even though misdirection may help the magician conceal how they achieve the trick, it also proves how the human brain can shift attention from one thing to another if the person who is communicating the message can effectively communicate. Bhowmagary broke down the concept of misdirection into three main types (Table 15 – Types of Misdirection by Jehangir Bhowmagary, 1972):

Table 15 – Types of Misdirection by Jehangir Bhowmagary, 1972

Type of Misdirection	Description
(1) Distraction / Diversion	If the magician looks somewhere, causing the audience to look at that same spot (while something else is going on).

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(2) Disguise	Occurs when a magician is makes the secret move look natural.
(3) Stimulation/Dissimulation	Making the entire movement of the trick natural – this means you must ask yourself “How would this action look if I <i>weren’t</i> performing a magic trick?”

Similarly, according to Juan Tamariz, author of *Five Points in Magic* (2007), “the eyes, the voice, the hands, the feet, and the body can be marshaled to create entertaining and seemingly impossible happenings.” He believes that understanding these five tools can express the communication from the magician to the audience and it can create a stronger impact in the end. In other words, the communication the magician portrays through his or her body language must act in accordance to what a person would do if they *weren’t* performing the trick. The movements must be disguised through a sequence of events to be consistent with the logic of the effect being performed.

The Magician - Entrepreneurial Journey

“Wonder is a very subtle, precious emotion, often lost in the gross hustle and bustle of modern life. When we feel wonder, we are immediately reminded of the purity and innocence of our childhood. Then everything was magical and mysterious. Magic should help us relive that wonder.” - Doug Henning

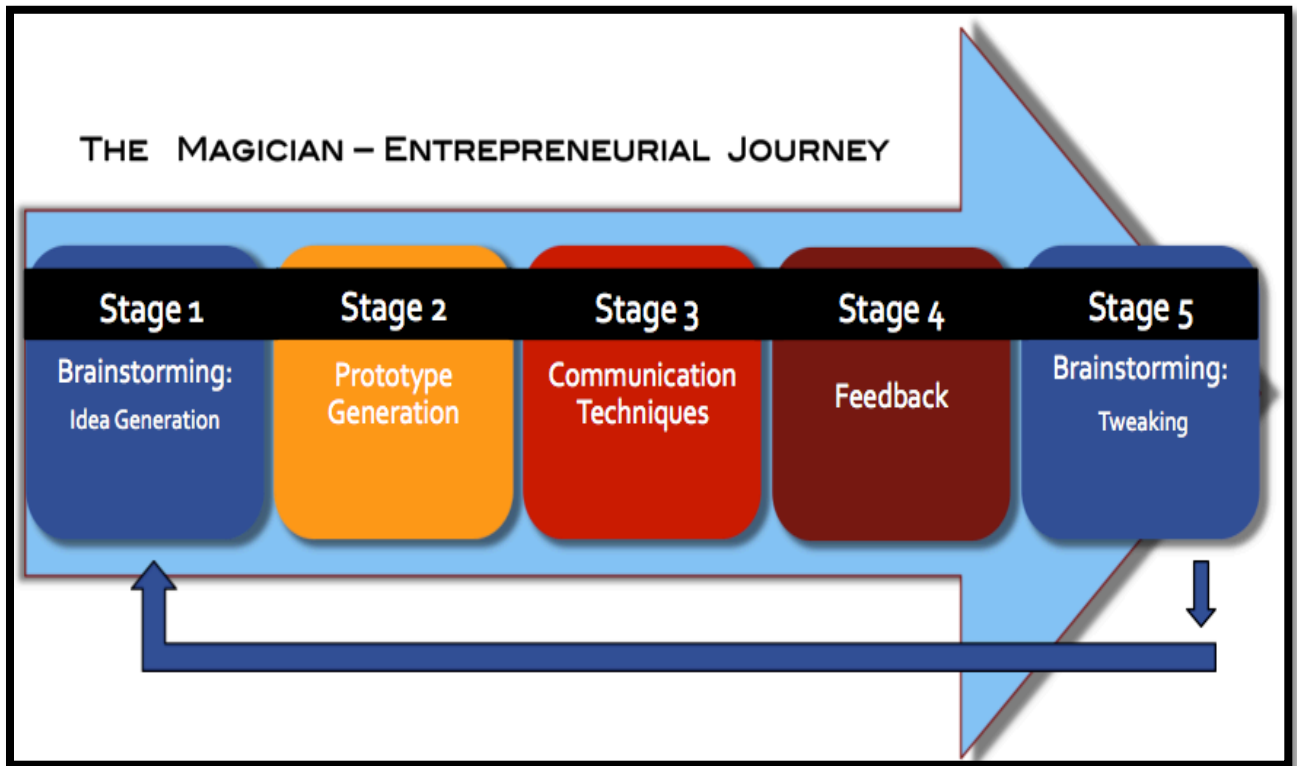
Creativity for Both Magicians and Business Leaders

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After conducting primary and secondary research, I have developed The Magician-Entrepreneur Journey (Figure 2). This is a journey that the mind of a magician and/or entrepreneur may go through in developing new ideas and presenting them to the public. Below you will find my analysis of each stage I created. In addition, you will find what a magician may think during each stage, what an entrepreneur may think during each stage, and exercises that will be able to assist an individual achieve that phase. The examples provided are from my research (prior studies and/or interviews).

Figure 2: The Magician – Entrepreneurial Journey



According to a TedTalk by professional magician and keynote speaker, Nate Staniforth, “The problem with magic tricks is when you open them to see what’s on the inside, you don’t ever find what you’re looking for. Because what you’re looking for is that spark and if you dissect it, that spark just dies.” Staniforth touches upon an important factor that relates to this research: magic is about creating a spark. Whether that spark be motivation to start something on a bucket list, that spark of curiosity to

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question what is possible or impossible, or that spark of imagination that was hiding way back in a person's mind, businesses should create that spark as well - I believe the Magician-Entrepreneurial Journey will help create that "spark."

Regardless of what that spark is, the trick or product/service should create *something* that makes people look at life from an easier or different point of view. For example, a spark created with a simple magic trick or a new product/service should allow the target market to be less stressed about life and create a positive feeling. *With a magic trick*, they should question the restrictions of possibilities they have been told by society, whereas *with a business* this new product or service should make a certain task easier to do or provide them with more convenience. In a sense, the concept of understanding how magicians think could be used as a model for contemporary and innovative ways of how a business can operate itself. Regardless, a magician and a company needs to create a spark in the audience's mind to help them in life in some sort of way, whether that be a psychological or physical aid.

Magicians and businesses are always looking for ways to expand in creative ways. For example, magicians are constantly developing new routines and presentations to create that sense of wonder and experiment with different types of ways until they feel one method is the best. Businesses, on the other hand, are constantly thinking of new ways to fulfill their customers and developing new products or services.

Magicians know how to creatively think because that's what a magic trick is: convincing the audience member the solution is in Area A, whereas the actual solution is in Area B. In regard to the corporate world, business leaders solve solutions in places where they have solved them beforehand, or where society suggests where the solution is. A creative thinker is able to solve solutions in a different area that may not have been explored beforehand.

Jason Randal (professional magician) and Harvard Business School Professor Stefan Thomke have analyzed the innovation strategies magicians use and how they can be applicable to businesses. Their research, titled *The Magic of Innovation* was released in June 2014. They explain that many new products that have a "wow" or "spark"

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factor are successful not because of the advertisement and marketing, but because of the innovation process. Magicians are the best types of entrepreneurs and innovators because they need to think of new tricks on a daily basis (usually under a low budget) in order to create a “transformational” experience. Magicians must always create a product or service that will *exceed* a customer experience. It is difficult to do this considering some audiences may have seen a variation of certain routine before; therefore the magician must put their own twist on it.

In addition, Thomke believes that “The solution to a problem often comes from the most unlikely sources. You need to go to all the meetings and events, in particular the ones you are sure will be a total waste of time” (p. 3). In other words, innovation may come at times when you least expect it or when you aren’t even looking for it. Innovation isn’t just the product or service itself; the innovation (in both the magician and entrepreneur’s case) is making the consumer feel good about the product or service. This starts from the design of the product or service, the branding, the packaging, and finally, the actual product or service. For instance, it doesn’t have to be a brand new product or service. Ukraine design firm, *Reynolds and Reyner*, changed the packaging for their product and created a cigarette box that is shaped like a coffin to discourage users from smoking.

Creator v. Performer

After conducting research, I have come to the conclusion there are three types of magicians: (1) Creator, (2) Performer and (3) Creator-Performer. I have also characterized how a business leader may also fall under those categories and outlined my theory below. During the Magician-Entrepreneurial Journey, the Creators are

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mainly involved with Stage 1, 2, and 5, the Performers are mainly involved with Stage 3 and 4, and the Creator-Performers are involved in all stages (Table 15 – Creator / Performer):

Table 15 – Creator/Performer

	Creator	Performer	Creator-Performer
Magicians	Focuses on trick creation (creativity)	Focuses on connecting with the audience (communication)	Focuses on trick creation AND building a connection with the audience
	Creates magic for other magicians	Performs magic created by other magicians	Creates own magic and performs own magic (also performs magic from other magicians)
	“The Scientist”	“The Actor”	“Jack-Of-All-Trades”
	Example: Gimmick Inventor	Example: Script Writer	Incorporates gimmicks (s)he invented into their own show
Business Leaders	Explores opportunities never sought out before (creativity)	Focuses on relationship building (communication)	Looks at rare opportunities AND tries to establish relationships
	Creates new solutions to problems	Capitalizes on current solutions to problems	Develops new products, yet still may tweak current products to make them better
	“The Inventor”	“The Salesman”	“Jack-Of-All-Trades”
	Example: Product and/or App Developer	Example: Salesman, Marketing, Communications, PR Manager	Founder & CEO

In addition, after conducting my interviews, I realized that many magicians collaborate with other magicians. This concept actually surprised me considering many magicians are “secretive” about their methods. They continued to tell me that collaboration allows different perspectives to come into play since everyone comes from various backgrounds with diverse experiences. For instance, a person may have seen or heard

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something that could inspire a new routine or trick. In the magic industry, collaboration is called a “magic jam.” This could consist of numerous magicians coming together and brainstorming different ways to develop a new routine.

Keith Sawyer, author of *Group Genius*, demonstrates that collaboration is key to building any type of innovation. Sawyer also believes that “The key to improvised innovation is managing a paradox: establishing a goal that provides a focus for the team -- just enough of one so that team members can tell when they move closer to a solution -- but one that’s open-ended enough for problem-finding creativity to emerge” (p. 29). When conducting a collaboration session with your team, make sure they have a goal in mind, yet the solution to the goal can be as creative as possible.

Sawyer’s point is critical to understand if an individual wants to become creative. By learning from different types of people and how they think, it will provide a new perspective into your life as well. For example, you may not think of something in a certain way until someone else says it. This supports my research when conducting interviews: all of my interviewees said that they become more creative by surrounding themselves with other people who have different ideas.

Below are creative and communication strategies magicians currently use that can help business leaders develop that “spark” to not only fulfill, but exceed their customer’s initial needs or wants. I first analyzed the creativity techniques, such as the *initial phase of developing a new idea*. I then further explain the communication techniques one may use in order to *promote their new idea*, whether that is pitching the concept to investors, engaging in a conversation with a new client, or motivating employees to achieve a goal.

I understand that there could potentially be other examples an individual may use for each stage, but I have provided the ones I feel are most relevant and relatable. In addition, the strategies are not in any specific order.

Stage 1: Brainstorming

Ultimate Goal: Idea Generation

The Importance of Brainstorming

The first stage is trying to think of a potential idea. There are two common methods an individual may use, the top-down method or the bottom-up method. The Top Down Method is most commonly used for Stage 1, whereas the Bottom Up Method is most commonly used in Stage 5 (both can be used in either stage).

Magician Jason Randal and Harvard Business School Professor Stefan Thomke have analyzed these strategies in their published work titled *The Magic of Innovation* in 2014. A Top Down technique is when an idea or question comes to mind, such as “Wouldn’t it be amazing if....XYZ happened?” For example, this would happen if a magician says “Would it be amazing if I took their signed card, placed it in the middle of the deck, and when I snapped, the card was now on top?” In this case, they are thinking of the *end* result first and working backwards.

A Bottom Up technique focuses on an improvement of an existing routine, method, strategy, gimmick, or idea. For example, this would happen if a magician says “I know how to control a card in the middle of the deck to arrive at the top of the deck without the spectator knowing the method. What trick could I do with this?” In this case, they are thinking of what they could do with a *current* method and working forward.

Even though some businesses may use a Bottom Up Strategy, most entrepreneurs use the Top Down Strategy, in which they see a potential problem and work backwards to find a solution. A Top Down technique for business would be the creation of the CD Walkman: “Wouldn’t it be amazing if you could play music wherever you wanted?” Thomke argues that the MP3 Player improved the CD Walkman and was a great product, which enhanced technology. However it was Apple who took it to the next level, thus creating iTunes. Apple then continued to use the Bottom Up Technique by focusing on an improvement of a current product.

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An example of the Bottom Up technique is Thomke's research of the company IDEO. The workers there will look at all the current technology they have and use a Bottom Up approach on how to make the technology better - they call this the "Tech Box." More specifically, he believes that when combining the Top Down and Bottom Up Techniques together, most of the "eureka" moments happen.

Stage 1: Brainstorming Strategies

(1) Create a Think Tank

Having multiple solutions to one problem is always a good thing. As a result, it's always beneficial to have a team come from different backgrounds with varied experiences to help solve problems. One method that Stathi Zaf explained when I interviewed him was the Think Tank method he uses to develop new routines:

(1) Create a Think Tank: Magic Example: Ten people, including him, go to someone's house once a month. They will order pizza, hang out, and talk about magic. They then sit around the table with everyone holding sticky post-it notes and a pen. Each person writes down an end-result to a potential trick, but not the method. Another person then presses a stopwatch that will beep every minute. For ten minutes straight, each magician must think of one way on *how* that trick could be accomplished and writes his or her idea under the other person's sticky note. After each minute, the sticky note is passed to the person on his or her right, so now each person has a different trick. They must then write down a potential method for that trick without repeating another person's method. At the end of ten minutes, each person shares the methods that were developed for each trick.

(1) Create a Think Tank: Business Example: A team of entrepreneurs could gather together and each write down different "problems" or "obstacles" they experience in their day-to-day lives. As the timer begins, each entrepreneur must write down a

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solution to the other entrepreneur's challenge, as Stathi Zaf described. As a result, you may end up creating over one hundred new products/services at the end of the session. In addition, you could also have employees write down internal problems they have and/or solutions to achieve those problems, or marketing campaigns for clients.

Some successful businesses already use this strategy to help their employees with their creativity skills. For example, many cities hold a "Hack Day", or a "hack-a-thon." This is when a team of computer programmers code in an extreme manner for a short period of time (a few days or a weekend) to see what they can develop.

(1) Create a Think Tank: Exercise: Try to gather a team together and use the Think Tank method for ten minutes. You may need to alter things depending on the challenge and/or the team members.

(2) Opposite Object Method

Forcing yourself to think of combining two completely different ideas to merge into one can enhance your creativity, as many businesses are successful because of this concept. For example, in the book *Innovate the Pixar Way* (2010) by Bill Capodagli and Lynn Jackson, they explain that modern fast food popularity we have today was inspired by Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonalds. When he learned about Henry Ford's assembly line, he combined it with selling cheeseburgers. In other words, by combining two things that may have looked like they had nothing to do with each other (industrial assembly lines and cheeseburgers), McDonalds was created.

(2) Opposite Object Method: Magic Example: Similar to the Think Tank Method, Stathi Zaf invites other magicians to his house and requests that each person bring at least five random objects. These objects could range from cell phones, books, playing cards, coffee cup, pictures, hats, etc. He encourages the more "crazier" and "bizarre" objects, the better.

Once everyone has arrived, he writes down all the objects on notecards (one notecard per object). After mixing up the notecards, he takes out two random notecards that have two random objects on them. For explanation purposes, let's say the two objects

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were a pillow and a camera lens cap. Zaf takes those two objects and places them in the middle of the table. He provides each magician with a pad of sticky notes and has a stopwatch that will beep every minute.

The Think Tank Strategy then begins: Before the stopwatch begins, each magician must individually write down a trick and a method on one sticky note that has to do with those two objects. Once everyone is complete, Zaf starts the timer and each magician passes their sticky note to the person to their right. As a result, each magician now has a different “perceived effect” in front of him or her. Each magician has one minute to write down a *different potential method* for that trick.

Once the minute is complete, the magician passes the sticky note to his or her right again. The magician now has a brand new perceived effect in front of him or her with two potential methods written underneath – yet, he or she must write down a new method that does not repeat a method that has been said beforehand.

This process continues for ten minutes and at the end, the magicians may have ten potential original magic tricks with ten potential original methods. In other words, in ten minutes, ten magicians develop 100 different methods for potential magic tricks. The magicians then go around the table individually discussing the potential trick idea and the potential methods that came with it.

Zaf believes this technique works because it makes people think outside the box. He strongly believes the last three or four sticky notes are the hardest because a magician cannot repeat what has already been written down. Additionally, he believes the more “opposite” and “random” the objects are with each other, the more impactful the exercise can be.

(2) Opposite Object Method: Business Example: Businesses could use the same idea for product development or marketing campaigns. For instance, a company could take

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two random objects and have employees try to incorporate those objects into a new product, or somehow incorporate those two objects in the new marketing campaign. One specific example is the Cirque du Soleil show, which combines circus activities with a Broadway show. Another example is Huggies, which combined diapers and underpants to create Pull-Ups.

(2) *Opposite Object Method: Exercise:* Try to find two objects that have *nothing* to do with each other and write down ideas on how you could integrate them into a new product or service.

(3) *Talk to Other Industries and Have Other Interests*

One main ingredient to creativity is to gather different perspectives from other people, places, and things. Magicians can be creative with other magicians, but that is only one perspective. Talking to other people who don't know magic or people who aren't in the specific field can provide a completely new perspective and may be able to assist in some way.

(3) *Talk to Other Industries and Have Other Interests: Magic Example:* On October 16th, 1865 at Egyptian Hall in London, Colonel Stodare changed how magic is performed today. At his show, he picked up a traveling case, placed it in the center of the table, opened the briefcase and the audience started to clap. Inside the case was a human head wearing an Egyptian headdress, representing the sphinx. Many people thought it was a wax figure inside the case, yet when he said "Sphynx awake" the eyes opened and it started to recite a poem. As Stodare closed the case, he took it away from the table, opened up the case again and a pile of ashes poured out of the case. Thomas William Tobin created it and he sold it to Colonel Stodare at the time. Thomas William Tobin went to the London Polytechnic in which he started to learn about chemistry, yet also had a background with architecture.

At the time, magicians were working on a new illusion called *The Pepper's Ghost*. The concept was that a large sheet transparent glass was angled slightly towards the audience and would reflect someone sitting in the orchestra pit. Therefore, it brings the

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illusion that the person in the orchestra pit is actually on stage, without the audience realizing the person on stage is in the orchestra pit. For the first time, audiences could actually see “ghosts” on stage.

Henry Dirks, who invited the concept, always believed it would have to be illuminated with sunlight because a sheet of glass is not reflective, so it needs a tremendous amount of light for a reflection. However, if the concept only relied on sunny day’s in London, it could never been successful as it is today.

At the time, Professor John Henry Pepper knew another invention called the oxy-hydrogen lamp, which was just being created (today it is known as limelight), and it was a chemical lamp that was bright when exposed to hydrogen or oxygen. As a result, they hired Thomas William Tobin, who was studying chemistry, to work on Pepper’s Ghost and illuminated the ghost in the orchestra pit. With his architect background, he understood how angles worked on stage and offered the prototype to Colonel Stodare. After Stodare’s performance, the London Newspapers were guessing the method, but no one knew how it worked, one of who were Charles Dickens.

Before *Pepper’s Ghost*, magicians would either do sleight of hand or use gimmicks to accomplish their magic, but for the first time this created the “optical illusion” portion of magic use today – it was the beginning of “illusion” magic.

(3) Talk to Other Industries and Have Other Interests: Business Example: Even though *Pepper’s Ghost* is a magic trick, companies use it today for entertainment purposes. Without two opposite industries combining ideas (theatre and science), *Pepper’s Ghost* would not exist and stage illusions would not exist. In simpler terms, *The Pepper’s Ghost* concept is that two images are super imposed in the same spot with glass. Disney Land now uses this concept in some of their attractions, such as haunted mansions. It also helped develop heads-up displays in cars in dashboards, interactive videogames, or anything in the film industry with an optical bench and a beam splitter.

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Belle Beth Cooper wrote an article for online magazine *Fast Company* regarding creativity. She states that having a wide knowledge of different types of perspectives can enhance your viewpoint of the world and help you think of different solutions to problems. She believes that those who are creative read, take notes, and review their notes more often than those who do not consider themselves creative.

You want to make sure your team has a diverse background and come from different types of industries. It is difficult to develop new ideas on your own with the knowledge and experience you only have. Collaborating and talking to industries that know nothing about your industry is a fantastic way to try to develop new ideas.

(3) Talk to Other Industries and Have Other Interests: Exercise: Ask yourself how you can integrate two passions you have. For instance, Joel Ward has a magic trick using a tennis ball and a borrowed wedding ring. However, it was inspired when he was playing his favorite hobby, tennis, and talking to someone who was not a magician that suggested the idea. Another example is how Kayla Drescher thinks of routines: she listens to music as she tries to imagine a trick that could go along with that type of music.

More specifically, Vinh Giang, who is a keynote speaker and also performs magic, dedicates time every month to meet with his friends called “Mastermind.” He says “We have a group of friends where we sit down and discuss what's helping us in life. What philosophies and lessons have we learned that helped us? It's a place where you aren't afraid to say crazy things. All our minds together *become* an entity. When all our minds come, my thoughts aren't just mine but I say my thoughts and then we bounce around that idea. We all have our own experiences but now it gives birth to a fifth person with marketing, financial, (or any other type of background). The questions that are being asked are ‘why are we doing this?’ Everything we do now is behind that mission. How can I further develop my personality? Look at yourself like a piece of art and you are continuing mold that clay. Most people think you are currently a mold of clay and believe that is who they are.”

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(4) Do Not Overthink

Many entrepreneurs or businesses are trying to analyze elaborate theories to create complex products or services, where the answer may be sitting right in front of them. In addition, they try to think of these complicated ideas, whereas some of the best ideas are the simplest. Business leaders – especially entrepreneurs – want to create “the next best thing”, when in reality, most “new inventions” are quite easy to explain.

(4) Do Not Overthink: Magic Example: Alex Stone, author of *Fooling Houdini* (2012), says that magic is a crash course in applied neuropsychology - it teaches us how and why our brains work the way they do. For instance, there is a gimmick in magic known as the “Thumb Tip.” This is a fake rubber thumb magicians use to put over their real thumb. You can hide dollar bills, scarves, and other small objects in there, yet the audience can’t see it because it blends in with your skin. In this case, the audience is *literally* staring at it the entire time, but with the correct presentation, communication, and misdirection, no one notices.

In addition, when I interviewed Doug McKenzie, he says that when he tries to develop new ideas, he tries to think of the aftermath when the spectators are explaining the tricks to friends and family. He believes that the trick is too complicated if it cannot be explained in one sentence or in ten words.

(4) Do Not Overthink: Business Example: Entrepreneurs and businesses may be trying to think of over-complicated ideas, yet most of the time the best ideas are the simplest ones. For instance, Uber allows everyday people to drive strangers to their destination rather than waiting for a taxi. This business model is extremely simple: Stranger A driving Stranger B to Stranger B’s destination. In addition, Disney may have their own theme parks, hotels, and cruise lines, but at the core, it is about story telling with the characters. Without the characters, Disney would not exist.

(4) Do Not Overthink 3: Exercise: Look at the most successful companies, products, or services. At the core, what is the primary function of that company, product or service? Also, can you explain your new idea in less than one sentence or ten words?

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(5) Ask Questions

Magicians are successful because they know the day in the life of an audience member. People are impressed with magic because it has the “irrational” side of the brain to work. By asking questions, it will force people to think on a level they may not have thought on beforehand.

(5) Ask Questions: Magicians Example: Audience members may ask themselves “Did the magician actually read my mind? Did the magician actually make that coin disappear? Did the magician actually saw the woman in half and restore her back together?” As the magician, you must be able to present the trick well enough so that when people ask these questions to themselves, they will truly believe the magical moment.

More specifically, Stathi Zaf says he asks the Six Main Questions when trying to develop a trick: Who, What, Where, Why, When, and How? By doing this, it enhances his creativity on **who** the trick will target, **what** the trick will be, **where** would he perform this type of trick, **why** would he do this type of trick, **when** the trick would be performed, and **how** the trick would be accomplished.

(5) Ask Questions: Business Example: Mark Zuckerberg, founder of social media site Facebook, wanted to connect the world in a unique way. He asked himself “How will I be able to connect people across world without the use of a telephone or email?” As a result, Facebook was created.

(5) Ask Questions: Exercise: Dr. Robert Maurer, author of *One Small Step Can Change Your Life: The Kaizen Way* (2014), he defines “Kaizen” as “Using very small steps to improve a habit, a process, or product. Or, using very small moments to inspire new products and inventions.” He believes one of the most successful ways to be creative is to ask small questions as he believes it creates a mental environment that welcomes unabashed creativity and playfulness. The following questions are used to help him become more creative:

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- (1) What's one thing I wish to contribute to the world with my art, my business or my skill set?
- (2) Whom could I ask for help or inspiration?
- (3) What is special about my creative process/talents/business?
- (4) What type of work would excite and fulfill me?

(6) Look for Alternatives, Not the Correct Answer

Being able to use another object, product, or service to fulfill another object, product, or service is very common and is a great way to be creative. It forces your mind to see other uses an object, product, or service can fulfill other than the primary use it was developed for to begin with.

(6) Look for Alternatives, Not the Correct Answer: Magicians Example: Many magicians will use playing cards after their performances to write their business information on it. In other words, they use the playing the card the spectator used in the trick as their business card. Even though the playing cards are used for the magic trick, it can also be used as providing information to your audience members for a future show.

(6) Look for Alternatives, Not the Correct Answer: Business Example: An example of alternatives for a business could potentially be the use of the business card. For instance, you could hand out business cards in the shape and look of a gift card to help promote a certain campaign. Another example is taking an object that your company is known for and creating another product out of it. For instance, a lensed cap for a camera could be hollowed out and turned into a coffee cup.

Kathleen Eisenhardt published a study titled *Making Fast Strategic Decisions in High-Velocity Environments* (1989). In her study, she states that fast decision making occurs

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when there is more information available compared to less information available, resulting in more alternatives. In other words, the greater the number of alternatives considered simultaneously, the greater the speed of the strategic decision process. She also discusses the concept of the two-tiered advice process. This occurs when all of the team members provide their input, yet more of the weight is given to the more experienced team members (this happens when the decision needs to be made fast in a high-velocity environment).

(6) Look for Alternatives, Not the Correct Answer: Exercise: Rather than simply looking at an object, product or service for what it is used for, look at it as its primary function. For instance, a water bottle is used to hold water, yet its primary function is to be a portable container that can hold things in it.

Stage 2: Prototype Generation

Ultimate Goal: Creating Context

The Importance of Prototype Generation

The second stage is developing context around your idea. In other words, this is the beginning of developing your brand around the product or service you developed. Creating context is especially important of the marketing strategies you may use when trying to show your product or service to the public.

Stage 2: Prototype Generation Strategies

(1) Product Placement

The location in which your new idea is positioned is critical for success. This could range from release date to the environment in which the product or service is surrounded by.

(1) Product Placement: Magic Example: Every magician I interviewed told me their

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shows do not consist of “tricks after tricks.” Each routine they perform is put into the show at that moment for a reason. For example, most magicians show a quick visual trick first to gain the audience’s attention and their “best” trick last. In addition, Michael Trixx told me that when he is trying to test out a new routine – that may be weaker than the others – he would perform stronger routines before and after it. In other words, he uses a “sandwich” principle so the weaker routine will actually look better than what it actually is.

(1) Product Placement: Business Example: If you are an owner of a shop, you may realize some products sell better than others. If you want some of the weaker products to be sold more, you could potentially place them next to the products that are sold the most. As a result, this may cause the customer to view the weaker product as better quality.

(1) Product Placement: Exercise: Whether you are a magician or business leader, analyze which tricks or products are more popular than others. As a result, try to strategically place the “weaker” tricks or products in between the stronger ones to give the perception that everything is high quality.

(2) Create a Lifestyle

Many creative companies are successful because of what their product or service represents, not simply what the function of the product or service is.

(2) Create a Lifestyle: Magic Example: There is an online retailer called *Theory 11* that sells magic tricks. However, not only do they have a team that develops and sells tricks to the public, but they also create custom playing cards, clothing, and accessories for your every day life. Theory 11 could have easily only sold magic tricks, but they wanted people to live their brand as well.

(2) Create a Lifestyle: Business Example: Disney started out as telling stories through television networks using fictional characters. Nowadays, they are now much more than movies and television shows: they create an experience no matter where you go. When you hear the word “Disney”, you may think of their logo, but when trying to

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describe what they actually do may be difficult at first. This is because they took the fictional cartoon storylines and created a lifestyle out of them.

Another example is Harley Davidson lifestyle. Harley Davidson sells motorcycles, yet many of the consumers who buy the motorcycles also have facial hair, enjoy classic rock and roll, and have other products owned by Harley Davidson.

(2) Create a Lifestyle: Exercise: Your product may be great, but how can you expand even more? How can you develop a *feeling* people receive when they hear your brand's name? Can you only sell your tangible product or intangible service, or can you build a lifestyle around your brand? Try to create a "fake" lifestyle and understand hobbies your customers may be interested in if they enjoy your product or service. Analyze your target market other than just "knowing they need this product or service to fulfill their problem." The more you know your customer as a *person*, the more you can influence them in having your product or service.

(3) It's All About Them

People are stronger to care about something if it relates to them somehow. For instance, a magician does not just want to do magic tricks all night without creating some sort of meaning behind them. Additionally, a consumer will not just care about a specific product or service if it has no value to them. According to Henning Nelms, author of *Magic and Showmanship* (1969), he says "when showmanship is carried far enough, it can even create an illusion of meaning where none exists" (p. 9).

(3) It's All About Them: Magic Example:

Rather than making a coin disappear, David Copperfield took an opportunity at pop culture to make the entire Statue of Liberty disappear. In addition, rather than make a coin dissolve through a coffee mug, he decided to take his entire body and walk through the Great Wall of China. Not only is David Copperfield taking magic to the next level, but he is also performing tricks with national landmarks, which make it more personal for the audience.

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Use Their Emotions: Another example is Harry Houdini's escape feats. People were attracted to his performances because he was putting his life at risk. It brought an emotional appeal to the audience that made them think they could witness death at any point during the show.

Using Their Name: I interviewed Eugene Burger who analyzes the psychology of close-up magic. Eugene Burger says "When I sit down at a table to perform magic for strangers, the very first thing I want to do is find out their names. People deeply enjoy hearing the sound of their own names...knowing a person's name is power." Burger constantly repeats the spectator's name to create a personal bond immediately after they meet.

Jonathan Levit performs a routine where the spectator counts down a certain number of cards and ends up stopping at the card they selected earlier. However, he changed the routine where rather than counting down to a random number, he asks the person to think of someone in their life that means something to them. He then asks the spectator to count down one card per letter in the name and the last letter ends up being the selected card.

Don't Make It About the Magician: Bedros Spidey explains this concept in the January 2016 Edition of *Penguin Magic's Monthly Magazine* when he talks about "togetherness." He says "Try to say things like 'let's play a game', 'let's try this', 'I want to try an experiment with *you guys*.' Essentially break that performer/spectator wall and create a sense of togetherness" (p. 40).

Use Their Hands or Borrowed Objects: Another example is by magician Nate Kranzo. He says that one meaningful way to create a strong reaction is do something in THEIR hands. He lists examples such as: cause one sponge ball multiply in 30 little balls, make words or numbers appear on their palm, and/or cause a penny to vanish or change into a quarter in their closed fist.

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(3) *It's All About Them: Businesses Example:* Customers (and people in general) feel a sense of importance when someone remembers their name or an event that occurred to that person. For instance, it shows more respect to formally call someone by his or her name. Rather than simply stating what the benefits are with that product or service, business leaders must look at the customer and analyze what their true needs are and how their product or service can benefit their individual needs. If an entrepreneur has a new product, he or she should first build rapport with the potential customer and learn about parts of his or her life. The entrepreneur should then *ask* if they have a specific problem in a certain situation (pertaining to the entrepreneur's product/service) and *then* see if the product or service could solve the issue.

For example, if you are trying to sell a house, do not simply provide them the facts about the house. You should ask about their family, where they live now, and what they do for a living. Once you know that information, you can revolve the context of the facts into their type of lifestyle to make it more personable.

A company must focus on their true customer's needs first if they want to persuade someone in thinking that their product or service is better than their competitors. A business leader must create a common ground the customer and business leader can relate to, followed by introducing the product or service.

(3) *It's All About Them: Exercises:* Make sure that's not just about the "deal" or the "money" – try to make the connection with that person as much as you can. Think of ways to not only be the magician or business leader, but think of ways to be their *friend* as well to show you truly care about them.

(4) Tell a Story

Magicians and entrepreneurs are always looking for the "next best thing" to stand out. Everyone is looking for that "wow" factor that differentiates themselves from their competitors, yet they still want to draw people in to see more. However, the most successful businesses incorporate some sort of "story" into their brand. In other words, businesses want you to *care* and stories are the best way for people to *care* about

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something. As human beings, we are born to be problem solvers, yet we are attracted to the unknown, such as the end of a story.

(4) Tell a Story: Magic Example: In the January 2016 edition of *Penguin Magic Monthly Magazine*, Bedros Spidey explains what he calls the “Seven Deadly Sins of Social Magic.” He explains that you should not always perform strong effects. That may seem contradictory, yet Spidey says, “If you do magic that is SO strong that it becomes ALL about the magic, they will love it. They will love the magic and be so impressed, but they may not remember you, because to them, you’re just the magician; the dancing monkey. Use effects that are strong, but not dynamite. Rather concentrate on the journey, the story, and display ‘personality magic’ rather than performance magic” (p. 40). In other words, he likes to bring his audience on a journey and tell a story.

Another example is Dan White’s magic show titled *The Magician* located at the Nomad Hotel in New York City. In the beginning of the show, music comes on and an old man walks onto the stage, types on a typewriter, and puts the note into a box, which is left in view for the entire show. At the very end of the show, Dan White opens the box and on the piece of paper was a list of everything that happened during that specific show (the names of the audience members that participated, what they did for actions, etc). In other words, the “journey” Dan brought the audience on was a visit from his “future” self to his “past” self, predicting the outcome of the show.

Kayla Drescher also uses a routine in her show where she brings the audience on a journey. She invites three males to come on stage and they each play different “stereotypical high school characters.” For instance, she has one person be the jock, the nerd, and the theatre enthusiast. In this example, the audience and herself are going on a “journey” together as she is telling a story and they become different characters. She also provides them with fun nametags as they can bring them home as souvenirs afterwards.

Justin Willman also tries to think of a “theme” or “plot” for his tricks. In one performance, he talks about the use of technology and how it has changed the way

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people think. As he is explaining this concept, he proceeds to do a trick with a person's cell phone in the audience.

Magicians are also known for providing a “twist” ending. For example, Penn and Teller are two magicians who perform together. For one of their routines, Penn borrows a cell phone from a spectator but throws it to Teller without the spectator knowing, yet the audience sees it. At this point in the routine, the entire crowd knows the Penn doesn't have the phone anymore and Teller has it, except for the spectator. However, at the very end of the routine, the cell phone ends up teleporting to a location in the crowd where a dead fish is in a cooler. Penn cuts the fish open and the cell phone is wrapped up in a plastic bag. In this sense, the audience thinks they know how the trick is done and Teller has the phone the whole time – whereas the spectator thinks Penn has it -- and then at the end, Penn and Teller reveal neither of them have the phone and the entire audience is fooled.

(4) Tell a Story: Business Example: Walt Disney didn't look at the details, such as which rides to put in, what type of food to serve, or how the parking situation would pan out. Disney only worried about one thing: giving his customers a magical experience. He then believed everything would fall into place, which it did. For instance, in Andrew Stanton's TedTalk titled “The Clues to a Great Story”, he explains the concept of “The Unifying Theory of 2 + 2.” Stanton is a playwright and notes that the elements you provide and the sequences you provide them in are critical on how the audience feels during the story. He explains that every character has some type of goal he or she wants to achieve. Stanton uses the example of the father in *Disney's Toy Story*, Woody. He believes Woody's ultimate “goal” was to do what is best for the child, Andy.

For the Disney film *Finding Nemo*, one of the characters named Dory, has a short-term memory. Therefore, viewers are always wondering if Dory will forget where she is at times, but in the back of their memory questioning if Nemo, (another character), will be found by his father.

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Another example is the chewing gum brand, Extra. They created a video advertisement that told a story of high school sweethearts and their life together through the wrappers of the gum. It currently has 18 million views on YouTube and is ranked one of the best commercials of the year. Their product is very basic (gum), but they brought the audience on a journey, which captivated them more.

Finally, in the book *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die* (2007), authors Chip Heath and Dan Heath explain the success of story telling within academics. They confirmed that using stories to tell historical events is more effective for students to understand what happened during the event and as a result, will remember the content more.

If a company wanted to do a “twist ending” concept, it could be applicable to a release date for a product. For instance, if Apple is releasing a new phone on a certain date, they could advertise all the products, except for one. The day before it is released, they could announce the new feature, which was unexpected, and cause more conversation about buying the new phone.

(4) Tell a Story: Exercises: When building a new trick, product, service, or brand, always ask yourself the following questions: Can you imagine your business as a Broadway play and yourself as the Director? Can you visualize the major pieces of the production, such as the story, setting, and roles?

(5) Build a Brand Around Your Strengths

Magician Michael Ammar believes that the secret to creativity is simply being you. More specifically, he says in his lecture, “Don’t try to be a copycat and replication. Continue to amplify who you really are and what your character is. This will impact the material you select and how you perform it.”

(5) Build a Brand Around Your Strengths: Magic Example: Michael Trixx combined two of his passions together to create a unique magic show: magic and rock and roll. As a result he performs a 45-minute show that only consists of rock and roll music playing in the background with a unique style. With his unique style, it would be very

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difficult for another magician to create that brand again.

(5) Build a Brand Around Your Strengths: Business Example: There are many entrepreneurs who went after their passion and focused on their strengths to build a company. Most notably would be Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft Computers, who was fascinated by computers since eighth grade, as he would design video games. In addition, published author Brandon Stanton created a social media trend called *Humans of New York*. His strength was journalism and photography so he combined those two passions to create photography-blogs asking strangers from New York different questions about life.

(4) Build a Brand Around Your Strengths: Exercises: Look at your core competencies and understand the true reason why you are successful. Ask yourself: Can you create a unique lifestyle with your brand, excluding your product or service? Will your competitors be able to replicate the exact product with their distribution channel? When comparing two similar companies, what are the reasons people will come to your company?

Stage 3: Communication Techniques

Ultimate Goal: Creating Engagement and Trust (Effective Communication leads to Relationship Building, which leads to Long Term Value)

The Importance of Communication

Being able to communicate and influence your audience in a way to have them believe in a certain perspective is essential in becoming a magician. The communication techniques are important to master, yet you must also persuade your audience. This is not only applicable to magicians, but business leaders and marketers as well. A company or business may have the most creative communication and marketing campaign, yet if they can't make their target audience change their thinking or behavior over a specific topic (or brand), then their communication and marketing campaign was not strong enough.

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More specifically, Herbert W. Simons and Joanne Morreale researched the concept of persuasion in 2001 titled *Persuasion in Society*. In their findings they describe, persuasion as “human communication designed to influence the autonomous judgments and actions of others” (p. 7). The author discusses how psychological inconsistency can disturb people and make them feel uncomfortable. As a result, they will do anything they can to avoid or remove it – this is why magic is so successful. This type of belief is known as “balance theories”, “dissonance theories” or “congruity theories” in the psychology field. Magicians use a psychological mis-balance when the magician destroys the “reality” of an action and they do something that doesn’t “match the reality.” For instance, taking a coin and making it disappear doesn’t agree with the “norm” of a psychological belief.

Simons and Morreale continue to say that persuading someone isn’t necessarily a bad thing – companies try and persuade you into buying something all the time with advertisements and you buy that product without realizing you were persuaded. This is parallel with magicians because we persuade people that “nothing is in this hand” or “the card is lost in the middle” and we simply make the audience believe us without question.

In order to have a strong business, you must also be able to build a strong relationship, which can assist you with persuasion. As a result, having strong communication skills can help build that strong relationship. Relationships can range from internal relationships (employees, managers, bosses, etc) to external relationships (customers, clients, suppliers). Magicians can instantly build a relationship with their audience members using their tricks as tools. However, one does not need to know or perform magic tricks to have strong relationships.

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Verbal Communication Strategies

(1) Learn How to Improvise

In his book, *Group Genius* (2007), Keith Sawyer explains the importance of improvisation. He believes that “The key to innovation is always to manage a subtle balance of planning, structure, and improvisation.” Sawyer conducted an experiment where he handed out Lego blocks, colored plastic playing pieces, dice, and a deck of cards to different groups. They had twenty minutes to design a new game that had to be played in less than five minutes and cannot take more than ten minutes to play. All of the groups played each game and ranked on the most creative. The results showed that those who were the most creative were the groups who started playing the game early in the twenty-minute period and improvised and modified the game as they went along. The least creative games were the ones in which teams used the full twenty minutes carefully planning out the game but never actually playing it. The lesson was that “improvisation, interwoven with planning, is the key successful innovation.”

(1) Learn How to Improvise: Magic Example: There are two main reasons magicians are “masters” at improvisation. The first is that if anything happened in the show that was unexpected from the magician, he or she knows how to react in an appropriate way. For instance, if the magician guesses the wrong card, he or she has an “out”, or a plan to convince the audience he or she didn’t mess up the trick. In this example (where the magician guesses the wrong card), the magician could say “Perfect, we will use this card (the wrongly named card) in order to find your card.” The second reason a magician should learn how to improvise is because it helps with acting and creativity. When you know how to improvise, it allows you to think outside the box and develop bizarre ideas. Many magicians were actors before they became magicians and have said that attending improvisation classes has helped them perform better to their audiences.

(1) Learn How to Improvise: Business Example: Sawyer explains that some companies are allowing their employees to “improv” in a collaborative way. For instance, he explains, “Companies such as Gore and Google tell their employees to

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devote 10 to 20 percent of their time to unplanned new projects, but still that means 80 percent of the time they're working on official planned projects. Jazz and improv comedy are at the other extreme, where there's essentially no advance planning. This spectrum parallels the organizational contrast between incremental change and transformational change. If you want a radical innovation, you need your organization to be at the improvisational extreme."

In addition, you must always have a "Plan B" for all types of factors in your business. For instance, are you prepared if an investor wants a different deal for your company? What do you say to the public if the marketing campaign fails? Are you prepared for any external event and how it will impact your company, such as losing electricity?

Daniel Goger, writer for the online blog *Think Like an Innovator*, wrote a piece about Pixar and their strategy of "plussing" titled *Plussing: How Pixar Transforms Critiquing into Creating* (2014). He states that when animators show their video drafts to the creative team, rather than criticizing the project thus far, the creative team member must add a constructive suggestion as well. Pixar say they have been built on the core principle of improvisation, which accepts all ideas and the "Yes, and..." principle (when someone says an idea, rather than denying it, you say "Yes and..." and add onto that idea).

(1) Learn How to Improvise: Exercise: One idea is to sign up for improvisation and acting classes. You will learn how to think on your feet when an unexpected situation comes your way.

(2) Do Not Memorize

In some cases, it would be beneficial to memorize a script. However, if you are performing magic, memorization is the last thing someone should do. Of course, it is essential to memorize the "secret" moves, yet when it comes to the presentation or patter of the routine, you may stumble upon your words, which would cause you to "freeze" up. Additionally, a business leader should not try to memorize any sort of sales pitch, as it should be adapted according to the situation.

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The difference between written and spoken communication is the number of input channels or senses you use. If a person is reading information and doesn't understand it, they can easily go back and re-read it, or go to another source for clarity. However, if a person is trying to understand another person while they present, and they don't understand what the other person is saying, you must ask the person "Can you repeat that again?" which may be awkward and/or waste time.

(2) Do Not Memorize: Magic Example: Henning Nelms explains that, "If anything goes wrong, the man who depends on memory may fail entirely. The conjurer who extemporizes is less polished, but he is always spontaneous. He may be embarrassed when something goes wrong, but his embarrassment is not aggravated by the fact that he has nothing to say." In other words, he states that the best way to "memorize" lines is to create them while you are rehearsing for the show. A person should memorize the sequence of steps to complete the routine, yet only the gist of the lines at each step as each performance will have a slightly different wording depending on the environment and audience.

(2) Do Not Memorize: Business Example: When giving any sort of presentation, do not memorize the material the presentation is about. You should know and understand the main points, but not memorize word for word your presentation. You should vary your "Elevator Pitch" depending on the audience and atmosphere.

This is similar to improvisation where an investor catches you off guard by either interrupting you or saying something you did not expect. If you memorized your presentation word-for-word, it will be difficult to stay in the present moment and continue presenting, as you will try to go back and find out where you were in your "speech."

(2) Do Not Memorize: Exercise: When developing a script, do not type and write because that is not how you will perform. You should always record yourself talking about potential lines to say in your routine and jot them down later. Presentations should always be conversational, thus creating a stronger connection with the other individual or audience members. One exercise that Vinh Giang does is calling his

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friends and asking them out to lunch. He then secretly records the conversation over lunch and goes back to listen how he normally talks. Friends enjoy his presence because of his authenticity, which is why friends enjoy your presence as well. When interacting with another person, it should sound like a friend talking to another friend (or groups of friend if you have a large crowd).

(3) Let the Audience Connect the Dots

A sense of “self-accomplishment” occurs when the human brain figures something out without knowing the answer directly. Many successful magicians and companies provide the audience just enough information so they can figure out the rest themselves rather than direct information.

(3) Let the Audience Connect the Dots: Magic Example: Doug McKenzie has a routine where the spectator multiplies personal numbers on a calculator. For instance, he may ask them to multiply their birthday, their home address, their lucky number, and/or certain digits from their social security number (the numbers can range from anything). After the multiplication is complete, the final answer ends up being the spectator’s cell phone number. However, he doesn’t directly tell them that the answer is their phone number. He simply asks “Does this number mean anything to you?” After a few seconds, the spectators realize what has happened and it is a stronger routine.

(3) Let the Audience Connect the Dots: Business Example: The company H & M created a billboard in SoHo, New York. The billboard said, “W_at’s _issing in Soho?” In this example, the “h” from the word “What” and the “M” from the word “Missing” was, in fact, missing. As a result, it forces the viewer to fill in the blank in their head and realize the company was H & M.

Another example a company could do is to include a “secret” feature in their new product and *not* advertise that feature. Once the customer receives the product and realizes what the new feature is on their own, it will cause more people to talk about it, which will result in word of mouth marketing.

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(3) Let the Audience Connect the Dots: Exercise: Many products and services are created that solve a problem the market didn't even realize they had. In a sense, this is the same concept: you want the audience to figure something out without directly telling them. When you market a new product or service, try not to reveal *everything* to them, but rather allow the customer to figure out things for themselves.

Non-Verbal Communication Strategies

The location you want your audience to look when you are presenting, all the way to the feelings they receive when you are communicating with them, can all be influenced by non-verbal communication. The body language used when talking to others is actually helping others interpret our verbal communication. Magicians are always trying to “read” what people are thinking and to adjust how they should change their routines, if necessary. However, many people do not realize that body language goes both ways: your own body language is expressing certain messages *and* you must be able to read body language of others to determine messages they are giving out.

(1) Act Confident, Feel Powerful

When human beings are confident, they expand their body. For instance, think of a sports team when they win a championship – they open up their arms and expand their body in an outwards motion. When people feel “powerless”, they do the complete opposite – they close up and make themselves small. Amy Cuddy, social psychologist at Harvard Business School, explains how powerful people feel more confident and think on a more abstract level by taking more risks in her TedTalk titled *Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are* (2012). Physiologically, confidence and power is influenced by testosterone (dominance hormone) and cortisol (stress hormone).

(1) Act Confident, Feel Powerful: Magic Example: When a magician is performing for an audience, the last thing the magician wants to do is act like they are the most “powerful” or “smartest” person in the room. The ego may get to their head since they have a “talent” that others may not have. Some magicians get caught up in their talent and don't realize that the spectator should be the most important person in the room,

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not the performer.

As a result, when a magician is performing, he or she should look out for the non-verbal cues of other people. For example, if the spectator feels like they are inferior to the performer, they may have their arms crossed, crouching over in their seat, or have an inward body position. If they are doing this, the magician needs to alter their performance in the correct way to not be as “superior.” A magician should have equal “intellectual power” with the audience. In other words, the magician should be performing extraordinary things in an ordinary way. When I interviewed Doug McKenzie and Joel Ward, they both said most of the spectators they perform to that are not willing to “participate correctly” or try to “trick the magician” are those who have their arms crossed.

Another reason magicians need to act confident (but not act powerful) is that many sleight of moves are difficult to do, especially if you are not a “master” in it. The only way to become a “master” in the move is to continuously practice it in front of a live audience. As a result, it will become better and better over time. However, a magician must continuously act like there is no move occurring, in which the audience will believe so as well.

(1) Act Confident, Feel Powerful: Business Example: Having confidence in the way you speak could help influence another party to think in a certain way. Whether that be an entrepreneur talking to an investor, an employee asking for a raise, going to a job interview, or motivating employees to reach their goals, if a person acts confident in not only in the way they talk, but in the way they present themselves, it could help making final decisions.

Be careful of your arm movements, as it could express certain emotions to other people without even realizing it. If you are at a business meeting trying to pitch your idea to a client, yet you feel inferior (and your body language confirms this theory), the investor may not think you are confident enough in your potential idea.

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(1) Act Confident, Feel Powerful: Exercise: Cuddy explains there is a difference in participation in her MBA classroom. She says that male students are more confident in participating than female students, which may contribute to the business school's gender grade gap. Cuddy discusses that equally qualified male and female students come into the classroom, yet there are differences in grades since half their grade is based off participation.

She wanted to test this theory with Dana Carney from University of California (Berkeley) and find out if it's possible to "fake confidence" – or in other words, "fake it until you make it." In other words, Cuddy and Carney wanted to find out that if non-verbal communication can impact how a person thinks and feels about him or herself.

They brought people into a lab and adapted their body language for two minutes in a high-power or low-power pose. Some high-power poses include standing with hands on hips, standing at the edge of a table leaning forward with hands on the edge, and/or leaning back in a chair. Some of the low power poses include standing with arms crossed, sitting down with arms crossed, and/or sitting down touching your neck. Before they conducted the poses, the researchers took a sample of saliva. After the subjects did the poses (either high-power or low-power), they gambled with a series of games, followed by another saliva sample.

The results showed that almost 90% of the subjects that were in the high-power position had a higher risk tolerance, compared to 60% that were in the low-powered position. The testosterone change (taken from their saliva) had a 20% increase with the subjects who had a high-power position and a 10% decrease with the low-power position. The cortisol change had a 25% decrease with the subjects who had a high-power position and a 15% increase with the low-power position.

In simpler terms, only two minutes in a high-power or low-power position can change how your body feels, which could result in a change of how you confident or comfortable you feel. Whether this is a magician performing a show, or an entrepreneur selling a sales pitch, confidence levels can increase if you conduct a "power" position by yourself for two minutes.

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(2) Be Aware of Your Facial Expressions

Saying that facial expressions can show emotion may seem obvious, yet many performers do not realize this. More specifically, even though eye movements can (sub) consciously make someone else look in another direction, it can also reveal emotion. Juan Tamariz, author of *The Five Points in Magic* expands on this concept as he says “Use your gaze to transmit love, desire to communicate, irony, playfulness, surprise, relaxation, sweetness, illusion, disappointment, desperation, pride, rage, fear, hate, affection, etc” (p. 7).

(2) Be Aware of Your Facial Expressions: Magic Example: Magician Tony Brent said in the January 2016 edition of *Penguin Magic’s Monthly Magazine* that he sometimes thought that when he puts a new routine into the show and it does not receive the amount of applause he thought it would, the problem would be the actual trick. However, he soon realized it was his facial expression. He explains by saying, “Upon close examination of the details however, I finally realized that I was totally wrong. The actual problem was my facial expressions. When I am concentrating, I have a tendency to frown. When I put a new routine or effect in the show, my thoughts would be on that new piece, even though it might be much later in the show (and) I wound up frowning when I should have been smiling. I was telling joking but not looking happy.” He later suggests to “making a conscious effort to put a smile on your face the next time you perform and make note of the difference.”

(2) Be Aware of Your Facial Expressions: Business Example: By knowing the feelings others receive when you (sub) consciously make a facial expression may or may not break a deal with a potential client. For instance, if an entrepreneur is doing a sales pitch to a potential investor, the entrepreneur wants to connect with the investor during the presentation and the performer’s eyes could have a potential factor. One example is from Alex Todorov’s from Princeton University, where he demonstrated that judgments from political candidate’s faces in just one second can predict 70% of the United States’ Senate outcomes. As a result, try to understand what your facial expressions are saying before you give a presentation.

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(2) *Be Aware of Your Facial Expression: Exercise:* One technique that Tamariz has been using to make his shows better is asking his colleagues what they believe he is trying to express only using his eyes. He may do this before performing a new routine and would do a “test-run” on his friends. He takes a paper bag and cuts out only the holes. He then silently performs the routine to his friends but without using the patter so the eyes are the only things his colleagues are able to see from his facial expressions. Afterwards, he asks what type of emotion they think he was trying to express. By doing this, it helps Tamazriz adjust his facial expressions to the feeling he wants to portray when performing his routine to an actual audience during a show.

Another technique is by Henning Nelms, author of *Magic and Showmanship*. He explains that a person shouldn't practice specific expressions like smiling or frowning. In fact, if a person wants to develop more facial expressions, he or she should go into the mirror and continuously make different faces and try not to repeat one. This allows the person to build up a “subconscious vocabulary” of expressions and invent the best expression for each situation spontaneously. However, he also notes that a person should *never* think about their face while performing, which contradicts Tony Brent's advice of continuously smiling. This theory may differ depending on the performer.

(3) Eye Movement Can Control Attention

Michael B. Natter and Eric J. L. Egan further discuss the importance of attention control. This includes social cues, subtle, practiced, and precise perceptual-motor manipulations. Therefore, the presentation of the performance can be directly correlated to the perception of the performance.

(3) *Eye Movement Can Control Attention: Magic Example:* With the French Drop coin vanish, when a magician pretends to grab the coin, it must look natural as if he/she did actually grab the coin. The magician will pretend to grab the coin with Hand A and *look at Hand A, causing the eye movements of the audience member to look at that hand as well*, even though the coin is hidden in Hand B. The magician must also casually bring down Hand B (which secretly still has the coin) down to his side in a casual way. Overall, Natter and Egan state “clearly social cues and

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misdirection play a role in deception biological motion as a whole, but such overt clues do not fully explain the psychophysical manifestation of the deception.” In other words, the way the trick is presented impacts the reality for the audience member.

Apollo Robins, who studies pick pocketing, noticed that a curved hand motion by magicians added more “mystery” to a trick compared to a linear motion. This is because during a curve motion, the eyes can move in a more “fluid” motion compared to a straight motion.

(3) *Eye Movement Can Control Attention: Business Example:* If a business leader is executing an elevator pitch and needs to use objects to show the new product or service, they may be able to “force” the investors to look at the object at a certain time. For instance, the entrepreneur could gaze at the new product, suddenly shift the gaze towards the audience, and look back at the product. Even though you are not directly telling your audience members to look at the product, they will most likely follow your eye movements. In addition, if you want to create a video advertisement where the object moves in the video, it may be beneficial to have a curved hand motion compared to a linear motion.

(3) *Eye Movement Can Control Attention: Exercise:* When doing a presentation, not only film yourself, but also your audience members. Afterwards, go back and analyze where they looked at certain parts of the show to see the feelings they receive.

(4) Learn How to Fluctuate

The attention span of a monotone speaker compared to one who fluctuates his or her voice is much lower. In addition, a person cannot highlight specific features of the new product or service, or the important parts of a presentation.

(4) *Learn How to Fluctuate: Magic Example:* When a magician makes an object disappear, more often than not, the volume of their voice becomes lower. Right before the climax of the trick, magicians have a habit of slowly lowering the voice until it is almost inaudible. However, right afterwards, their volume becomes higher again. In other words, the spectators will want to see what comes next and this will increase

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their attention.

(4) Learn How to Fluctuate: Business Example: If a business leader is delivering a presentation and has certain points they *need* everyone to know, they might fluctuate their voice at important parts. Depending on the length of the presentation, those in the audience may lose attention and not remember the important pieces. As a result, one should change their tone and volume of voice if they want their audience members to pay attention to a specific part. Without knowing correct fluctuation, your voice may sound mumbled at key parts of your presentation.

(4) Learn How to Fluctuate: Exercise: Juan Tamariz uses an exercise that helps him when performing and his fluctuation of the voice. For example, when he is performing to different people, he says the same phrase “Please pick a card, any card.” However, he will say it in different ways such as asking for a favor, an order, absent minded, stressful, etc. When he has shows, he will say it one way to one group, yet another way to another group, and record which way received better reactions. Even though it is using the same words, he says them differently. It is the tone of voice that can influence the perception of your words, which in return can influence the perception of you (he also recommends you be as creative as possible and try to create vocal tones you’ve never heard of before).

In addition, Henning Nelms uses an exercise to help with speaking clearly. For instance, he opens his mouth as much as possible when he pronounces each vowel. He first starts with the “i” in the word “his.” He opens his mouth wider and wider until the vowel changes until it becomes a “short i.” Other words he uses are “the”, “bird,” “an”, “of”, “odd”, “fraud”, “old”, “you”, “could”, “tale”, and “tell.” Once a person has “mastered” those words, an individual can use the sentence “The old fraud could tell you an odd tale of his bird.”

Stage 4: Feedback

The Importance of Feedback

Receiving feedback is critical for any type of success. Gathering a different perspective from other people who don't know the mechanics and the workings of the trick, product, or service will be able to provide an unbiased view on how to improve it.

Feedback Strategies

(1) Non-Verbal Should Match Verbal

Sometimes, if verbal and non-verbal communication does not match, the audience may believe something that is contrary of what an individual wishes to portray. Whereas some people understand content better visually and others with their ears, it is critical that your pantomime matches with your verbal communication (even though magicians do this in order to create misdirection, they understand this theory, which makes them successful at doing the misdirection to achieve the trick).

Henning Nelms discusses two types of pantomimes: realistic and symbolic. Realistic pantomime deals with imaginary objects, yet the actions by the individual are performed as if the objects were real. Symbolic pantomime is used to describe an object or idea. For instance, if someone were to pat their stomach and then motion their hand to their mouth, most likely it would mean they are hungry, which would be an example of a symbolic pantomime.

(1) Non-Verbal Should Match Verbal: Magic Example: An experiment by Gustav Kuhn proved the importance of spatial awareness. His study, *Motor Expertise in Deception* (2015) discussed the unnaturalness of non-verbal communication with body language when performing a “pretend” task. For instance, when we pretend to pick up an imaginary object, our hand movement and structure is different compared to picking up a real, tangible object. However, professional magicians have mastered this concept by having *all* movements look natural. In the study, they tested if magicians

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show kinematic differences between the actions of holding imaginary objects compared to real objects. The conclusions showed that magicians' "pantomimed actions" were *very* similar and resembled real grasps when the object was actually there compared to non-magicians.

In their experiment, they had ten professional magicians and ten controlled subjects (non- magicians) pick up a block and move it ten centimeters away. The first trial the subjects actually picked up the object and moved it, whereas the second trial there was nothing there, but they still had to move the "block." This experiment confirmed "the pantomimed actions made by magicians may be indistinguishable from real ones because they have learnt that the best way to fake an action is by performing 'for real.'" The researchers also believe that the talent magicians have for doing this is simply from practice. Their belief is that a magician's "occipito-parietal visuomotor system (is) more flexible in its use of visual information to drive actions." In other words, magicians have a strong understanding of their visual and spatial surroundings in order to create a false action look real, thus having effective communication skills.

(1) Non-Verbal Should Match Verbal: Business Example: When conducting an elevator pitch to an investor, you need to make sure that what you are saying matches what your body language is saying. Since some people learn differently, they may pay more attention to your verbal communication than your nonverbal communication (or vice versa). Therefore, you want everything to match accordingly.

(1) Non-Verbal Should Match Verbal: Exercise: One exercise is to go through the physical actions without props. For instance, try to spread imaginary cream cheese on a bagel. Imagine picking up the knife, opening up the cream cheese container, and start to spread the cream cheese. Afterwards, actually do the action and see how the real action compared. In regard to magic, try to go through the routine without the props and how natural your body movements are. Ask a friend to watch you to see if the movements are natural. This should help body motions become more natural.

Another example is filming yourself do the presentation. Almost every interview I conducted, the magicians said they film themselves performing and review it after the

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show. Even though filming yourself perform and analyzing afterwards could be applied to any strategy to impact your communication skills, it may be the most beneficial exercise for this strategy. Vinh Giang, keynote magician and speaker, says, “I am obsessed with communication and showmanship skills. I recorded every single one of my keynotes. I start analyzing when the audience reacts. I truly believe that when you learn how to communicate, it doesn’t change your professional life, but also your personal life.”

More specifically, Stathi Zaf first re-watches his show with audio only, listening to his words carefully. Afterwards, he will watch the film, but with video only and no sound. He then analyzes his verbal communication and sees if it matches his non-verbal communication.

(2) Listen to Your Audience

Sometimes performers or business leaders want their audience to see what they offer so much, that they don’t realize it’s not exactly what their audience wants. Listening to your audience and what they truly desire and need is critical for any type of creation and improvement.

(2) Listen to Your Audience: Magic Example: When I interviewed Michael Trixx, he told me he discusses the show with individual people in the audience after he performs. However, rather than asking what they liked about the show, he asks what they *didn’t* like. He focuses on the cons rather than the pros in order to improve anything he may find necessary.

Vinh Giang, who is a keynote magician who talks to businesses, reveals how he listens to his audience every year before going on tour. For instance, he builds five different shows every year. He then invites five different groups of audiences to come and watch each show. Giang provides them a questionnaire and analyzes which tricks the audiences thought were the best. Afterwards, he builds his *main* show on the tricks that received the best feedback. He believes most people waste time building

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something that people don't actually want and then people become shocked on why their audience didn't like it.

(2) Listen to Your Audience: Business Example: Other than being a magician, Andrew Mayne is also a published author. He used to be a self-published author, but he received the attention of an actual publisher because he listened to the reviews and testimonials from other people. For example, he continuously checked the reviews and testimonials of the customers in order to see what he can improve upon. In general terms, there may be a feature in a certain product that people don't actually like that you may have assumed otherwise.

(2) Listen to Your Audience: Exercise: Develop focus groups before you release your new product or service. This will allow people that have never seen or heard of your product or service before try it out and provide you feedback. In addition, always ask your customers what you can improve upon rather than what you are already good at. You should always provide a "Feedback" sheet after any type of product or performance in order to fix any future products or performances.

Stage 5: Brainstorming: Tweaking

The Importance of Tweaking

Tweaking can occur at any stage in the Magician / Entrepreneur Journey, but it is most common after receiving feedback. Many new products and services are created because of an existing product or service. However, it is successful because a tweak occurred. This may be a small or large tweak, but that change was large enough to create a new product or service that became successful. Don't try to think of something brand new; look at established inventions and what is wrong with them. After the fifth stage in the journey, the process will begin again.

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Brainstorming: Tweaking Strategies

Both magicians and businesses always want to innovate and create new products and services, but they also must prototype and test them in their markets. They should then take what they have learned and re-vise the idea to make the next version. This process repeats until they have seen the success they wanted to see. Thomke and Randal state that, “Sometimes you need to search way outside the normal sources of knowledge to discover true magic - an unexpected but invaluable new approach to framing, understanding, and solving a problem that previously seemed hopefully intractable” (p. 6).

Change One Word/Thing: Magic Example: Tony Brent explains in *Penguin Magic’s Monthly Magazine* from January 2016 how tweaking a simple routine helped him receive better a reaction. He says, “During my Bill in Lemon (trick), I vanish the bill using flash paper. For many years, I would toss the burning paper straight up or off to the side a bit. One night I randomly tossed the paper more at an angle, over the heads of the audience and in front of the onstage volunteers; the audience’s reaction nearly *doubled*” (p. 42).

Tony Brent also explains the tweak he made with his Hydrostatic Glass routine. His philosophy is that “only when you alter tiny things do you sometimes stumble on to bigger things that can increase the reactions to your magic.” He explains it by saying “When I begin to tilt the glass over, I allow my thumb to move away from the hole so that water drips out. I act surprised and worried as if the trick isn’t going to work. This gets a solid laugh from the audience. After performing the effect thousands of times, I finally realized that if I hold the glass to the left, further away from my body it gets a much bigger laugh when the water drips out – a minor detail, but one that caused a major difference in impact” (p. 40).

Another example is when I interviewed Kayla Drescher. There is a well-known trick magicians perform where they draw a bowling ball on a big drawing easel. The performer then closes the easel and a real bowling ball appears out of the easel. However, Kayla decided to tweak this routine. Rather than using a bowling ball, she

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drew a pair of heels and produced the heels out of the easel. She would then proceed to put on the heels and perform the rest of the show in them. Not only did this make her stand out, but she also received such a great reaction that she named her show “Magic in Heels” which helps her stand out in front of the competition (other magicians).

Andrew Mayne, author and magic creator, believes that his effect called “Ghost Bills” (where two dollars dissolve through each other) was a tweak on another effect called “Misled” created by Timothy Wenk (where a pencil dissolves through a dollar bill). He believed that carrying a pencil in your pocket seemed unnatural and wanted the effect to seem more impromptu. Additionally, Mayne believes he is the first one to have a female magician be the protagonist in one of his published books- that’s the tweak and how it helped him become well-known as an author.

David Blaine is also a well-known street magician on television. However, one of the reasons people believe he was successful is that the camera focused on the reactions of the people rather than the magician. Past shows on television were focused on the trick itself, whereas David Blaine tweaked this concept to make the camera focus on the audience member’s reaction instead.

Change One Word/Thing: Business Example: Tweaking in magic is very similar to the concept of “analogical reasoning” in the business field. By using an analogical reasoning method, business leaders don’t need to understand every information about the situation in front of them. Business leaders are able to only look at a few factors and use them to apply the patterns of the past to the present problem or obstacle.

Andrew Stanton, writer for *Disney*, explains how *Toy Story* was different than other animations in the past. When they first created the concept of *Toy Story*, many of the Disney producers did not believe it would be successful. He went into detailed on the conversation when he approached Tom Hanks to voice one of the characters, and Tom Hanks asked if he had to sing. Animation at the time was about characters singing, but *Toy Story* was the first animation that did not involve singing. Even though it was still animation, that one tweak (not singing in an animation) created success for the film.

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Another example is social-media website Twitter. Before Twitter was created, an individual could use Facebook to post statuses, but many users complained that other users were creating statuses that were too long. As a result, Twitter was created and a user could only post something that was 140 characters. This small change made Twitter one of the most used social media platforms.

Finally, Star Wars was the first movie to put credits at the end of the film, rather than the beginning. Only a few films now have credits in the beginning, as they were inspired by Star Wars' creativity.

Paul Bartha discusses analogical reasoning more in-depth in his research at Stanford titled *Analogy and Analogical Reasoning* (2013). He states that analogical reasoning is an innate human behavior (and even living, non-humans use this technique), to apply old situations to new situations. Bartha continues to use an example from history where in 1769, Priestley suggested that the absence of electrical influence inside a hollow charged spherical shell was evidence that charges attract and repel with an inverse square force. He supported his hypothesis by appealing to the analogous situation of zero gravitational force inside a hollow shell of uniform density.

In addition, Giovanni Gavetti and Jan W. Rivkin from Harvard Business School published an article titled *How Strategists Really Think: Tapping the Power of Analogy* (2005). The authors use the following example on successful business practices with analogical reasoning: The supermarket, a retail format pioneered during the 1930s, has served as an analogical source many times over. Charlie Merrill relied heavily on his experience as a supermarket executive as he developed the financial supermarket of Merrill Lynch. Likewise, Charles Lazarus was inspired by the supermarket when he founded Toys R Us in the 1950s. Thomas Stemberg, the founder of Staples and a former supermarket executive, reports in his autobiography that Staples began with an analogical question: "Could we be the Toys R Us of office supplies?"

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Richard Neustadt, a political scientist, and Ernest May, a historian, wrote a book titled *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers* (1986). The book discusses the concept of using history to solve current problems, but also the dangers of it. The authors discovered that often the analogies do not fit or can be improperly applied to the modern problem, which results in a distortion of policy. The dangers of analogical reasoning, the authors say, is that they want business leaders and decision makers to not make any assumptions in the modern situation based off the historical decision that occurred beforehand, even though situations may have similar obstacles.

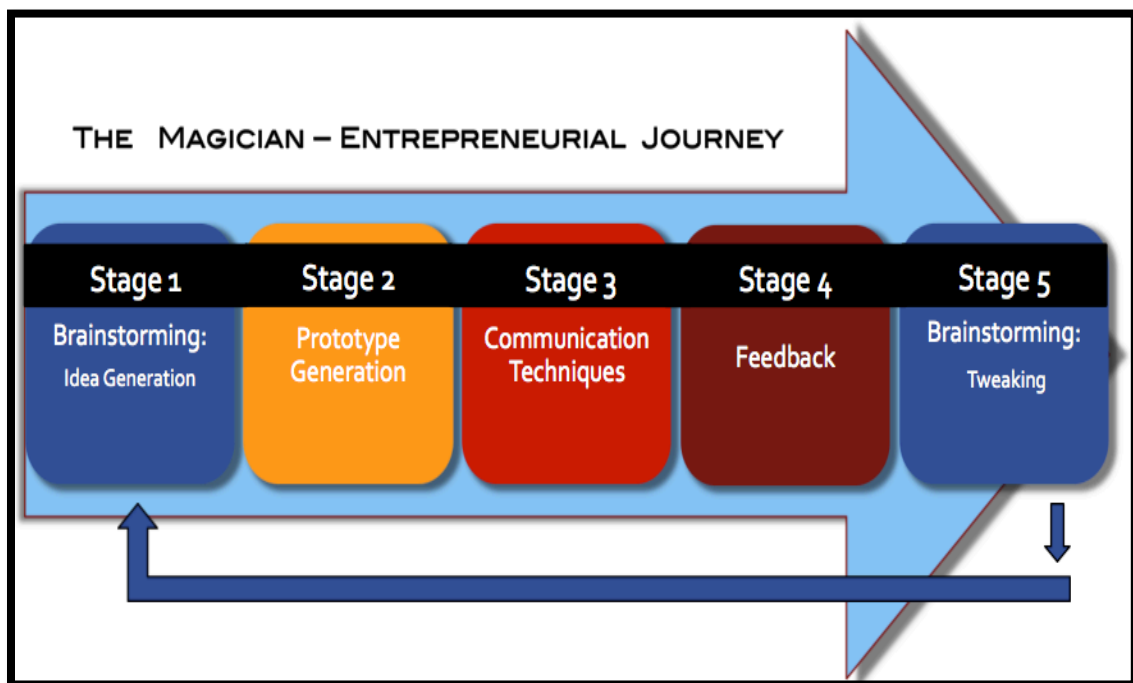
Change One Word/Thing: Exercise: One exercise that magician Doug McKenzie mentioned was the concept of changing one word to an existing idea. For instance, in magic there is a trick where you take the deck of cards and throw it on the ceiling and the spectator's card becomes stuck on the ceiling (called "Card on Ceiling"). However, by changing one word at a time, you could create a brand new trick: Card on Ceiling, Cellphone on Ceiling, Cellphone on Wall, Cellphone in Wall. At the end of the exercise, you can now create a trick where you take an audience member's cell phone, make it disappear, and it ends up inside the wall. Andrew Mayne and Kayla Drescher both used this strategy to develop Ghost Bills and the Magic in Heels routine, respectively. If you want to tweak an existing idea to product or service, try to find its fundamental use and change one word to try and develop a new idea.

Summary of The Magician – Entrepreneurial Journey

“A magician is only an actor – an actor pretending to be a magician.” – Harry Houdini

The Magician – Entrepreneurial Journey I have developed can be applied to any type of creation and/or communication process. There are more strategies that can be applied at any stage in the journey, but I have only noted the ones I found to be necessary to explain in accordance to my research. Both magicians and entrepreneurs – or any “artist” for that matter – can use this type of method to design new ideas and present them in front of any audience.

Figure 2: The Magician – Entrepreneurial Journey



Other Business Implications

“The universe is almost like a huge magic trick and scientists are trying to figure out how it does what it does.” – Martin Gardner

Even though my main intention when researching was to analyze the creation process and communication techniques magicians use, I also discovered other “business” tactics magicians use that businesses could learn from. They could be applied to any stage in the Magician – Entrepreneurial Journey:

(1) Value Is Positively Related to Trust & Likeability

Tim Sanders, author of *Likeability Factor*, defines likeability as creating positive attitudes in other people through the delivery of emotional and physical benefits. Sanders correlates likeability with success and happiness – the more likeable people are, the more likely they are to obtain desired jobs, acquire friends, have happy relationships, and so on. He also believes there are four elements of likeability: friendliness (expressing an appreciation of the other person through body language such as a smile or kind look or by verbal means), relevance (establishing a connection with the other's needs and desires), empathy (identifying with the other's situation and being sensitive to their feelings) and realness (appearing authentic and genuine to the other, being humble and honest). Sanders states that in order for people to add value to your product or service, you should try to sell yourself as a person first.

(1) Value is Positively Related to Trust & Likeability: Magic Example: As a magician, if the audience members like you *as a person*, they are more likely to enjoy your show (and the audience members also do not want to see you fail at a trick). One specific example are magicians who known as “table-hopping magicians.” They are most commonly seen at restaurants performing table to table to different people throughout the night. However, they may perform the same routine hundreds of times in one night, but they must maintain their enthusiasm at each performance as if it were their first time performing.

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(1) Value is Positively Related to Trust & Likeability: Business Example: Investors will want to invest in your new product or service if they *trust you as a person*. For example, Nalini Ambady from Tufts University showed that when people watch 30 seconds of no-audio video clips of physicians talking to patients, their opinions of the physicians “niceness” was negatively correlated if that physician would be used for their appointments or not. In other words, it did not matter what the content was that the physician was saying, but rather if the people liked him or her. Many people trust others in who they feel they can relate to the best.

(1) Value is Positively Related to Likeability: Exercises: Do not strictly talk about “business”, but rather talk about other things as well and make the customer feel like they are valued as a person. If the person only thinks that your meeting is about “making the deal”, then he or she will not be appreciated.

(2) Pick Your Market Carefully

Choosing a target audience should depend on your strengths and the opportunities you can take advantage of when developing new products or services. Many performers try to cater to all audiences, yet those who are successful only focus on a niche market. A business leader needs to understand his or her market and do whatever they can to satisfy them. If a business tries to develop products or services that is too broad, they will most likely fail. Below are successful magicians that catered towards a specific audience.

(2) Pick Your Market Carefully: Magic Example: Mark McGuinness, author of *Resilience: Facing Down Rejection and Criticism on the Road to Success* analyzed the creative process with magicians. In his blog, he stated, “Many magicians probably learn five or ten ways to do each of these common tricks (levitation, cutting in half, picking out a card, making something disappear, etc)”. McGuinness continues to use Harry Houdini, Dai Vernon, and David Copperfield as examples:

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1. Harry Houdini - “Houdini started out doing card tricks but became most famous for his death-defying escapes from ‘certain doom’ from drowning while bound, shackled, and sealed up in various containers, including milk containers”
2. Dai Vernon - “This clever magician, a master of card tricks, became the man who fooled Houdini when he stymied the great escape artist with a simple card trick”
3. David Copperfield - “Perhaps the most famous illusionist of the 20th century, he was famous for performing amazing magic routines on television, like making large (no, huge) objects disappear or flying around his stage”

He states that they had an end in mind already: Houdini wanted to perform escapes, Vernon focused on card tricks, and Copperfield enjoyed large illusions (all three magicians used the Top Down Creativity Mechanism).

According to McGuinness, “David Copperfield has one of the largest collections of information about magic in the world.” Copperfield understands the concept of magic and his target audience. The time and preparation he puts into creating his product and service is long enough to make him the most well known magician in the world.

(2) Pick Your Market Carefully: Business Example: This relates back to a business or entrepreneur doing market research on their target market and understanding what would attract them. Each magician listed is known for a specific thing. A business wants to specialize in that specific product or service and be the best they can be in that industry rather than catering towards everyone. Businesses must know their strengths and weaknesses. In a business scenario, they must understand their target market and deliver what they are good at rather than being an “all-round” business.

(2) Pick Your Market Carefully: Exercise: Do not try to “straddle” your business. You have to understand that your product or service should cater to only certain people, whether that is gender, demographics, age, cultural background, etc. The more

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focused your target market will be, the more successful you will be. Create a buyer persona and analyze who is your primary consumer.

(3) Simplify

A successful magician or business always wants to make their audiences see more. A magician does not want to show their audience *every* single trick they know. In addition, a business leader does not want to reveal *every* attribute to the product or service. Both professions want to “tease” their customers just enough to have their target market ask if they have more tricks (magician) or learn more about the product (business leaders). Simplifying what you are trying to sell enhances your audience to focus better. It helps to influence people if you have a simple avenue to your answer.

(3) Simplify: Magic Example: Paul Maccabee is a blogger for MaccaPR, which was named “Best PR Blogs in the World” by InkyBee.com. Maccabee compared marketing techniques that specific magicians have used that could help benefit business practices. For instance, he uses Derek Dingle, a British magician, as an example of “Focus Narrowly to Achieve Greatness.” In this example, he demonstrates that Dingle was known for his repertoire of multiple tricks, yet when he performed at a show, he did fewer than six. However, he also believes Dingle “did those tricks better than any magician in the world.”

Doug McKenzie also discussed his concept of pick-pocketing with me. He says that the reason pick pocketing is so successful is because the person is “overloaded” with information. Therefore, the “victim” doesn’t know when the secret moves are occurring (please note that Doug McKenzie does this for entertainment purposes only and hands the “victim” their belongings afterwards to demonstrate the concept of attention control).

(3) Simplify: Business Example: In a business perspective, you want to focus on a few key factors that will help you stand out in front of competition. You do not want to say *every* attribute your product or service contains. You want people to understand the product or service on an abstract level, followed by focusing on two or three

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concrete concepts. Successful online marketers do this all the time where they will “tease” you just enough in the advertisement that will make you visit their website to see the rest of the information. A perfect example of this would be a movie trailer.

(3) Simplify: Exercise: Regardless if you are a magician or business leader, you should be able to describe your trick, product or service in the least amount of words possible. Ideally, a customer should be able to explain it one sentence or less than ten words. This is similar to the “Do Not Overthink” concept in the Stage 1 Phase of the Magician – Entrepreneurial Journey.

Future Directions for Research

If an individual wants to pursue this study, there are few things I would recommend. The first would be to focus on the entrepreneurial way of thinking. My main research was mainly centered on the mind of the magician and what they do regarding creativity and communication. However, due to time and budget constraints, I was not able to analyze the mind of the entrepreneur and the current creativity and communication techniques they currently use more in depth as I would have hoped. Another factor would be gender. The magic community is male-dominated field and it would be interesting to find if there is a different creative strategy a female uses that males do not. However, I *was* fortunate enough to interview Kayla Drescher and her creative styles, which is in the research. Again, due to time and budget constraints, it was difficult to contact and find more research on the female creativity process (assuming if there is a difference). Finally, looking at more exercises magicians do in terms of creating and communicating would be beneficial. During my interviews, it was difficult to gather the certain strategies because it was very natural for them to create tricks and communicate with people.

Closing Remarks

After conducting research and travelling for interviews, I am now confident there are parallels for being a successful magician and being a successful business leader. As previously noted, a documentary on the content was also created. If you would like to see it, please contact me directly. In addition to the Bryant University Honors Program, The Goss Grant, and The Magic Castle, I would like to thank the following people for allowing me to have the opportunity to study this topic: Carolyn MacDonald (Mother), Mark Logan (Father), Michael Roberto (Faculty Sponsor), Tom Zammarelli (Editorial Reviewer), Jim Segovis (Honors Program Director), Stathi Zaf (Assistant Producer), and Brett Powers (Production Assistant). Thank you all for helping me realize that impossible is just a word.

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Appendix

Potential Interview Questions for Magicians

Introduction

- (1) Please state your name and say what you do for a living
- (2) Do you view magic as a full-time job, part-time job, or a hobby?
- (3) How many years have you been performing magic?
- (4) Where do you perform?
- (5) How did you get into magic?
- (6) What are some of your favorite tricks to perform and why?

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- (7) What type of magic do you perform? (close up, stage, etc)

Creator vs. Performer

- 8) Who do you think is the greatest “creative magician” of all time?
- 9) Who do you think is the greatest “performance magician” of all time?
- 10) Who do you think is the greatest “creative-performance magician” of all time?

Creativity

- 11) If you create your own material, how often do you create?
- 12) Is there a certain method or strategy you use to create a new trick or a new routine?
- 13) How long does it normally take you to develop a new trick?
- 14) What do you think is the hardest part in creating a new trick, routine or show?
- 15) What do you think is the easiest part in creating a new trick, routine or show?
- 16) What do you think makes a “successful show”?

Communication

- 17) After you create a new trick, how do you think the presentation of the trick impacts the trick?
- 18) How do you think communication with the audience is important when performing magic?
- 19) What types of communication techniques do you use in your shows?
- 20) How do these techniques enhance a trick?

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Business

- 21) Do you see any parallels in magicians and entrepreneurs?
- 22) What skills in magic have helped you in running your magic business?
- 23) Do you have any examples where you used your creativity skills you've learned from magic to help you in business?
- 24) Do you have any examples where you used your communication skills you've learned from magic to help you in business?
- 25) Why do you think creativity is so important in business?
- 26) Why do you think communication is so important in business?
- 27) How does perception play a role in business?
- 28) What do you think start-up entrepreneurs could learn from magicians?
- 29) What do you think established businesses could learn from magicians?

Magic Skills and Life Skills

- 30) Have you used any of the skills and techniques you use in performing in other life situations?
- 31) How do you think the concept of magic relates back to life in general?

The Change in Magic

- 32) How has technology impacted magic over the years?
- 33) In the last 20 years, the look of magic has changed to the general public. It leaped from stage to the "in-your-face" magic. What are your thoughts on the way close-up magic is portrayed on tv?
- 34) Why do you think these performers are successful? Do you think they are doing something that is unique from other magicians?

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- 35) What could see improved upon in magic?

Other

- 39) Do you have a story or specific show you would like to talk about?
- 40) What advice would you give younger magicians?
- 41) What do you think is the most important part about being a successful magician?
- 42) What do you think is the hardest part about being a magician?
- 43) What does the word “impossible” mean to you?
- 44) What does the word “magic” mean to you?
- 45) What is your ultimate goal when performing magic?
- 46) Is there anything else you would like to add?

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